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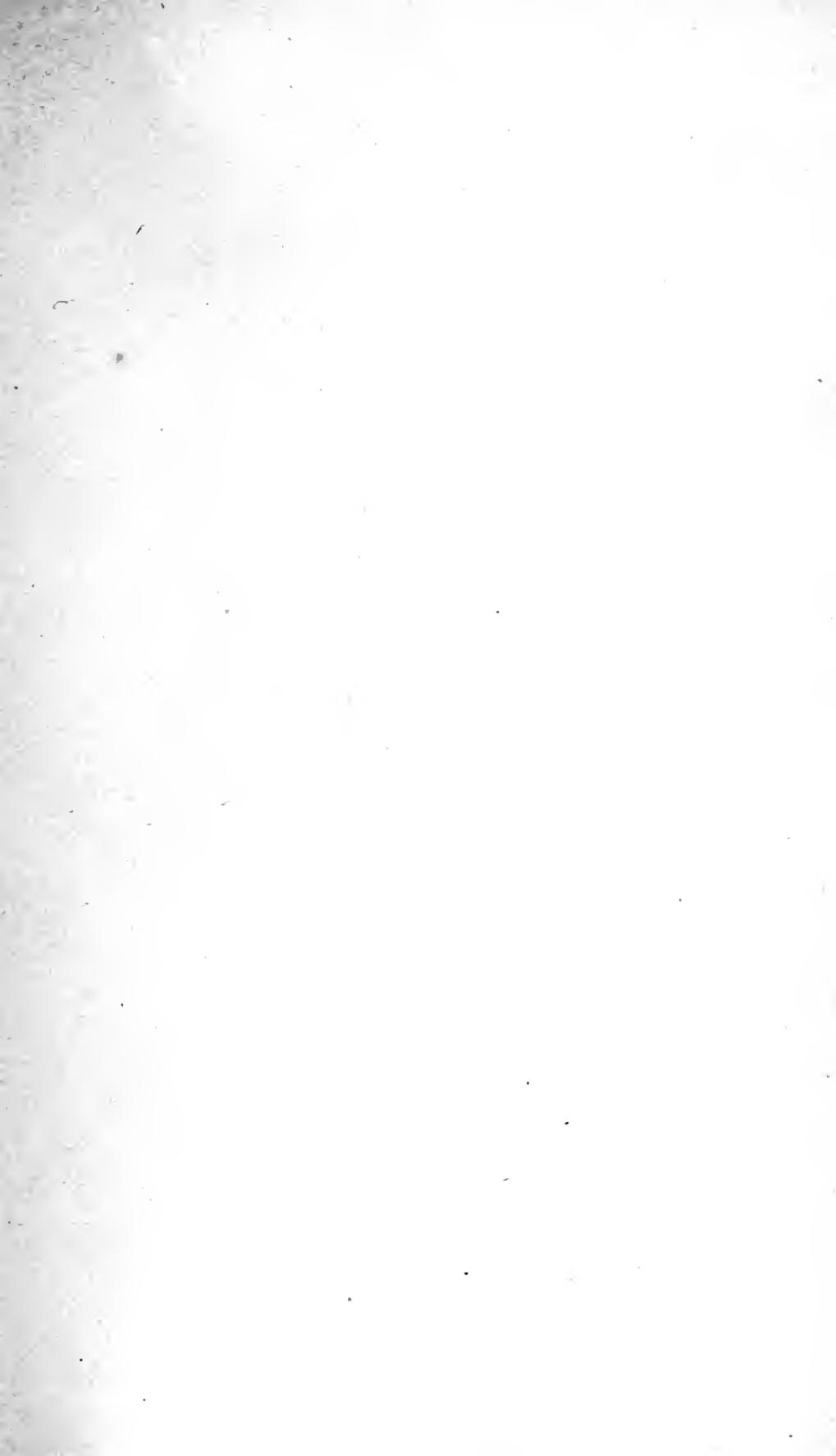
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# **HISTORIC ASPECTS**

**OF THE *A PRIORI* ARGUMENT CONCERNING THE**

**BEING AND ATTRIBUTES OF GOD**



# HISTORIC ASPECTS

OF THE *A PRIORI* ARGUMENT CONCERNING THE

## BEING AND ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

BEING FOUR LECTURES

DELIVERED IN EDINBURGH IN NOVEMBER 1884 ON  
THE HONYMAN-GILLESPIE FOUNDATION

WITH APPENDICES AND A POSTSCRIPT

BY

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## P R E F A C E

FIFTY-THREE years ago, that is to say in A.D. 1833, a Scottish gentleman, Mr. William Honyman Gillespie, published a work on the *a priori* argument for the Being and Attributes of God—a work of which some account will be found in the following pages.

The widow of this gentleman, who died in A.D. 1875, being anxious to promote what her husband had so much at heart—the sacred cause of Belief against Unbelief—is desirous of instituting a Lectureship connected with his name, as a means of good, and as a fitting tribute to his memory. The Foundress of the Lectureship hopes to endow it in such wise as that a course of four or six Lectures may be delivered at intervals of four or five years. The Lectures are to treat of such themes as the Being and Attri-

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butes of God ; the Divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ ; the truth of Christ's Religion ; or other cognate subjects, on which there is, in the main, an agreement among the vast majority of those 'who profess and call themselves Christians.' The tenure of the Lectureship is to be undenominational.

Those with whom the Foundress took counsel agreed in thinking it desirable, that the first course should have some immediate relation to that particular phase of Apologetics in which Mr. Gillespie took so deep an interest.

I need not detain the reader with any account of the circumstances which have induced me, with much diffidence, to occupy the unsought-for position of the First Lecturer on this foundation. The objects at which I have aimed are explained in the Lectures themselves. But I should like here to add one or two other considerations.

I am not without hope that the limitation and narrowness of the range of these Lectures may to some readers prove rather an advantage than the reverse. It is possible that the outlines of at least one portion of an abstruse question

may thus be more easily grasped, and that the study of more exhaustive treatises (such as, for example, those of Professor Flint on Theism and anti-Theistic theories) may be facilitated. It is also, I trust, conceivable that the quotations given in the Lectures, the Mottoes, and the Appendices may be found to present a body of information, such as is not elsewhere readily accessible within the same compass, and which may prove both helpful and suggestive.

My very special thanks are due, in the first place, to the Foundress for the great kindness and liberality displayed throughout our intercourse. Secondly, to the Rev. William Adamson, D.D., Minister of the Evangelical Union, who not only encouraged me in this undertaking (to which he had previously contributed a very able and useful pamphlet), but who generously relieved me from all trouble connected with the arrangements for the delivery of the Lectures. Thirdly, to the Rev. Robert Flint, D.D., LL.D., Professor of Theology in the University of Edinburgh. Besides my indebtedness to his volume on Theism (which may have influenced me unconsciously, even where I believe my conclusions

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to be independent of it), I owe gratitude to Dr. Flint for kind encouragement and suggestions in the way of study, and for my introduction to the work of M. Bouchitté. One other friend of long standing must not be passed by. The Rev. David Greig, M.A. of Aberdeen, and Rector of Addington in Buckinghamshire, is possessed of a large share of that metaphysical acumen for which his native land is celebrated. He has supplied me with much in the way of instruction and of suggestion, especially as regards the Fourth Lecture. But Mr. Greig must not be held responsible for any of my statements or arguments, with some of which he may, I fear, be found to disagree.

Despite these aids I claim to have made an independent study of all the leading authorities on the subject of these Lectures, with most of whom I possess an acquaintance of many years' standing.

The Lectures are now published in the form in which they were originally composed. In delivery, however, illustrations, particularly of the shorter Lectures, were freely supplied from passages which are now relegated to the Appen-

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dix. An epitome of the volume was also given in two Lectures delivered in Glasgow in January 1885.

I am very conscious of the value of the kind patronage bestowed not only by an audience both larger and more attentive than I ventured to anticipate, but specially also by those gentlemen who on successive nights very generously accompanied me to the platform. That body included, I believe, representatives from among those engaged in the Ministry of all the leading Christian communions in this city—Presbyterian, Episcopalian, and Roman Catholic. To each and all of them I beg to return my cordial thanks.

J. G. CAZENOVE.

EDINBURGH, 6th March 1886.

NOTE.—As it is just possible that a perusal of this volume may be attempted by some readers unversed in mental science, it may be well for their sakes to give a brief explanation of the terms *à priori* and *à posteriori*, as applied to the process of reasoning.

These words were suggested by the Aristotelian philosophy, and were originally applied as follows.

When we reason from cause to effect, we are said to argue *à priori*. Thus, for example, a farmer casting his glance upon

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a piece of rich soil, which is about to be tilled, argues *à priori* that the crop will be a good and abundant one.

But when we reason backward from effect to cause, our argument is *à posteriori*. If our farmer sees in August a splendid crop of wheat in a given field, he infers *à posteriori* that the soil of that field is rich.

In later times, under the influence of Hume and Kant, the range of these terms has been enlarged, and we commonly call all elements of knowledge *à priori* if they are antecedent to experience, and *à posteriori* when they are based upon experience.

Thus we know *à priori* the truth of the axiom, that ‘the whole is greater than its part;’ but men have learnt *à posteriori* that bread is wholesome, and hemlock poisonous.

LECTURE I.

B

'The proper, peculiar, and deepest theme of universal and human history, to which all others are subordinate, is the conflict of belief and unbelief. . . . All those epochs . . . in which unbelief—be it under whatsoever form it will—maintains a direful supremacy, and even if it should shine for a moment with a tinsel brilliancy, vanish before posterity, because no one willingly torments himself with a knowledge of the unfruitful.'—Goethe, *West-Ostlicher Divan*.

'An undogmatic creed is as senseless as a statue without shape or a picture without colour.'—Leslie Stephen, *Freethinking and Plain-speaking*, p. 124.

'The central truth round which all the rest group themselves is the conviction uttered in each eager *credo*, and implied in every cry from the heart's distress, that there *is* an eternal God, in whom we live, and who can hear us when we speak to Him ; from whom, further, we learn of His boundless knowledge, of His years which shall not fail, and of our own blessedness as to be found only in Him. From this root there has grown up a complete philosophy of life, at once theoretical and practical.'—*Ellen Watson* (Life by Anna Buckland), p. 164.



## LECTURE I.

It will not be denied that there have been multitudes of men and women—Jewish, Christian, Mohammedan, and others—who have believed in a real Theism. By a real Theism I mean the acceptance of the doctrine that there exists a supreme, sole, infinite Being, who has created and preserved all things, and without whose permission nothing has ever existed or can exist; a Being perfect in wisdom, in goodness, and in power, except in so far as His power is limited by His goodness, or by any laws which He has imposed upon Himself or impressed upon the Universe; a Being who is a pure Spirit without body, parts, or passions; a Being who has existed eternally in the past, who exists now, and who will exist eternally in the future.

But those who disbelieve in such a creed,

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who either hesitate concerning it, or who actually oppose it, may ask of the believers the profoundly important questions, ‘Why do you thus believe? What is the ground of your belief?’

To this inquiry the following seem to be the leading answers. ‘I received this doctrine from loved parents and teachers. To them it was “the life’s life of their being;” and it affected their conduct and their whole relations to all around them. I have given it a trial, often—it must be granted—a feeble, unworthy, inconsistent one. Nevertheless it has not broken down under the strain of this life’s sorrows and difficulties, or of my own miserably imperfect practice. On the contrary, it has made life endurable, and has been the source and mainspring of any benefits which I have been able to confer upon my fellow-creatures.’

One who speaks in this strain may possibly be quite unable to set forth the ground of his or her convictions in a strictly argumentative form. It must be owned, I think, that the class of whom such a Theist is a representative has been in the past, and will always remain in the future, by far

the largest. The well-known but true story of the judge who recommended a colonial official to give his decisions, but not to publish his reasons for them, is applicable to many subjects besides that of law. Comparatively few persons are sufficiently well skilled in the process of analysing the grounds of their convictions to be able to attempt the task satisfactorily. They have good reasons, but those reasons are implicit ones, and the endeavour to be explicit proves a failure. Wordsworth, in one of his earliest poems, has illustrated the danger of demanding from children their reasons for the judgments which they form;<sup>1</sup> and on deep and difficult subjects many of us must always remain children.

An example of the kind of argument which must always influence a large number, even of thoughtful persons, is given us in a work which has appeared since I undertook the delivery of these lectures. A lady of high culture and of earnest thoughtfulness became acquainted with the late Dr. Strauss. For some seven years her mind was deeply affected by his teaching,

<sup>1</sup> *Anecdote for Fathers*, showing how the practice of lying may be taught (vol. i. poem x. in the edition of 1841).

and she tells us that she ‘had to wrestle heart and soul with theoretical doubts.’ At length these doubts were resolved. By what process of reasoning was this result brought about?

By a process which, if we attempt to put it into mood and figure, may seem to have but little power. Her infant son fell out of a window and was killed. The mother sought for consolation in the various systems of philosophy which had been brought before her. The amount of support which she found in them shall be stated in her own words. ‘The whole edifice of philosophical conclusions which I had built up for myself, I find to have no foundation whatever—nothing of it is left—it has crumbled away like dust. What should we be, what would become of us, if we had no faith—if we did not believe that there is a God who rules the world and each single one of us?’

But to whatever degree convictions of this nature may be practically trustworthy for the individual, of course we cannot ask other minds to receive as true, conclusions, however sacred,

brought about by an experience like that of the lamented Princess Alice. The same must be said of many a similar basis of belief. There is, for example, the impress made by the consistent life of believers around us. Chaucer concludes the eulogy of his model parson with the emphatic lines :

‘ And Christes law, and His apostles twelf,  
He preached, but first He followed it Himself.’

If, on the one hand, as has been asserted, the faults and shortcomings of believers have wrought more injury to the cause of belief than whole volumes of argument ; so, on the other, a single consistent life may effect more in the way of persuasion than the most able and elaborate ratiocination. Such at least will be the case with many minds.

Nevertheless man possesses the great gift of reason, and no cause ought to shrink from courting investigation carried on by means of such a power. We may indeed ask ourselves, and ask those around us, to keep careful and sleepless watch, lest conscious or unconscious prejudice should disturb the process, which we take to be reasonable ; but we must not on any

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account, to borrow a phrase from Bishop Butler, allow ourselves to ‘vilify reason.’ Belief in Theism, like every other belief, must be tried at this tribunal, if it is to stand. It was no despiser of the claims of faith who issued to believers the command ‘to be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear.’

And what is true in this respect of advocates of Theism holds true of supporters of every other reply to questions concerning the supernatural. Thus, for example, the Epicurean of old ought to have asked himself whether, while admitting in words the existence of superior powers but denying their interest in human affairs, he was not practically though unavowedly teaching atheism. Those who proclaim in our own day what Mr. Goldwin Smith has called ‘the figment of a scientific God,’ should look to themselves lest they through unconscious prejudice be applying principles derived from other departments of knowledge into one in which they will not hold good. The same must be said too of the Pantheist, who identifies creation with a Creator, and the

Polytheist, who believes in ‘gods many and lords many.’

But most eminently is it true concerning the teachers of Atheism and Agnosticism. Not only may they be called upon to listen to the warning of an Apostle concerning those who did not like to retain God in their knowledge, but they come before the public standing at a disadvantage. They have yet to show that any great nation has found it possible for any lengthened period to live upon Atheism. They have yet to show that the dread of Atheism, as something inconsistent with settled government, felt by so many statesmen in Athens, in Rome, nay, even in the Paris of the Revolution of 1789, is wholly devoid of any sufficient basis or excuse. Many religions can point to achievements in the domains of science, of art, of literature, of legislation, of philanthropy, and of general civilization. Theism, particularly Christian Theism, can certainly do this. The nations which profess it are, in the language even of Gibbon, ‘the most distinguished portion of human kind in arts and learning as well as in arms.’<sup>1</sup> Avowed Atheists can not yet

<sup>1</sup> *Decline and Fall*, chap. xv. (*ad init.*)

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point to a long and brilliant bead-roll in many of these departments of thought and action. It is, of course, possible that some few men of eminence have not had the courage of their opinions, and have secretly disbelieved in Theism. But such men seldom influence posterity. Nor must it be forgotten that several of these inherited their share of the intellectual wealth of believing ages, and were often nurtured in an atmosphere of belief. Even physical science, which is so often cited as an example to the contrary, has received more aid from the camp of belief both in the Middle Ages and in modern times than is generally admitted. Art architectural can point to the Temple of Jerusalem, to the medieval cathedrals, abbeys, town-halls, and castles, and to the glories of the Alhambra, as associated with the idea of Theism. Art pictorial, similarly blended, may challenge the universe for any rival list of great names and triumphs. In music, again, the bell and the organ are creations of Theistic religion, mainly, it would seem, of its Christian form. Many literatures have made such faith at least their starting-point. Hebrew literature (for the Bible

is literature, however much more it may also be) is one illustration. It is highly probable the earliest Hindoo writings were, though less distinctly, of similar character. Anglo-Saxon literature begins with the poetry of a sacred bard, the lowly Cædmon, and the first great and enduring work of modern letters is the *Divina Commedia* of Dante. The Mosaic code of law, of which even sceptics have spoken highly, was intertwined with the nation's creed. And the grand creation of Roman law, though in great measure a product of Stoic philosophers, was so far from being anti-Theistic, that Christian emperors, witness Theodosius, found little difficulty in accepting its main outlines, and the student who opens the *Institutes* of Justinian is at once confronted by the words, '*In Nomine Domini Nostri Jesu Christi.*' On the philanthropy of at least one form of Theism, the Christian, it is almost needless to dwell, unless it may be permitted to call attention to the generous confession of a bystander, Mr. Lecky, to the effect that Christianity has suffered from the fact that so much of its charity is private and hidden, while the fierce conflicts connected with it are but too

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patent to every eye. Nevertheless its mansions of charity are also visible. Some of you may have heard of a stranger in a large town being allowed to address an assembly of Agnostics, and telling them of the inspection which he had made with the help of a guide. Here was an infirmary undenominational, but avowedly Christian. In another quarter stood some almshouses, and a dispensary, for impoverished Jews. This hospital was Wesleyan, another Roman Catholic. Anglicans and Presbyterians had their penitentiaries and other homes of refuge. But on asking for the similar solaces of human misery built by Atheists and Agnostics, he was informed that as yet such institutions were utterly unknown.

But it is time for me to return to my more immediate subject. When believers in Theism endeavour to act upon the advice to seek for reasons of their hope, they must, I conceive, search for their arguments by the course of looking mainly outward, or mainly inward. I use the word *mainly* advisedly, because the progress of inquiry will, if I am not mistaken, impress upon us a conviction that it is extremely

difficult, if not absolutely impossible, entirely to separate the one line of thought from the other.

Undoubtedly the argument from effect to cause (or, as logicians call it, the *à posteriori* argument) is the most obvious, and has been the most widely spread. It seems to have the sanction of an Apostle.<sup>1</sup> It is the argument by which (as Xenophon tells us) Socrates confronted the atheistic tenets of the little Aristodemus. It reappears in the treatise of Cicero *De Naturâ Deorum*. It has been elaborated (some say borrowed) by Paley in his famous book on Natural Theology ; and it seems, if we can trust the reports of travellers, to occur even to the untutored mind of the savage. With the specious counter-arguments by which this mode of reasoning has been met, I am not here specially concerned. Dr. Mozley, among his many great services to the cause of belief, has discussed this subject with his usual clearness and ability ; and to his remarks on the argument from design,<sup>2</sup> I may for the present be content to refer my

<sup>1</sup> Romans i. 19-31.

<sup>2</sup> *Essays, Historical and Theological*, vol. ii., ‘Essay on Argument from Design.’

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hearers. But it is possible to draw up a list of writers who have made use, either partially or exclusively, of another line of reasoning. Their arguments have followed an *à priori* course. If, in making such a list, we may include all the thinkers who have indirectly lent support to this process, the catalogue of its adherents will be found remarkable, not only as regards number, but also in point of weight and eminence. But, for the moment, it may suffice to say that, up to the date of the present century, three names have in this connexion been specially prominent. These names are those of Anselm, Descartes, and Clarke.

It is proposed, in these lectures, to deal mainly with the contributions to the subject made by these eminent men, and then to consider the additions furnished by the comparatively recent work of Mr. Gillespie, and some other thinkers of our own day.

This task may be regarded as an ambitious or as a humble one. Perhaps it is both. It is ambitious, in so far as it ventures on an estimate of the real value of each contribution, and it is not without much diffidence that I undertake this part of my task. It is humble, in that it

does not pretend to strike out any new line of its own. But there are times when it proves very useful to take stock, as it were, of what has been done. If I can succeed in giving an account which, without pretending to be exhaustive, yet on some features of the case goes more into detail than most of our English treatises on the subject, I shall not be without hope that these lectures may be found beneficial to those who may feel called upon to attempt any subsequent investigations upon the same all-important theme. To this end I shall not hesitate to call attention to any portions of the argument which seem to need further elaboration at the hands of competent students.

Need I say that writing as a believer who, in some measure, attempts to give account of the grounds of his own belief, I earnestly pray that no detriment to the cause of truth may be wrought through my own weakness or shortcomings; that whatever is said may be accepted, so far, and so far only, as is agreeable to the will of Him concerning whom I speak, and that He may bless this attempt, however unworthy, alike to him who speaks and to those who hear or read.



## **LECTURE II.**

**C**

‘Πρῶτον δὲ περὶ αὐτῶν ἐν τι μέγα σοι μημύων οὐκ ἀν ποτε φανέτην ψευδῆς, τὸ τοιόνδε. οὐ σὺ μόνος οὐδὲ οἱ σοὶ φίλοι πρῶτοι καὶ πρῶτον ταύτην δόξαν περὶ θεῶν ἔσχετε, γλγνονται δὲ ἀεὶ πλείους ἢ ἐλάττους ταύτην τὴν νόσον ἔχοντες· τόδε τοινυν σοι παραγεγονώς αὐτῶν πολλοῖσι φράξοιμ’ ἀν τὸ μηδένα πώποτε λαβόντα ἐκ νέου ταύτην τὴν δόξαν περὶ θεῶν, ὡς οὐκ εἰσὶ, διατελέσαι πρὸς γῆρας μείναντα ἐν ταύτῃ τῇ διανοήσει.’—Plato, *Laws*, book x. p. 888.<sup>1</sup>

‘The root of the matter appears to me: A want of sympathy with the great body of those who are now endeavouring to guide and help onward their fellow-men. And in what is this alienation grounded? It is, as I believe, simply in the difference on that point—viz. the clear, deep, habitual recognition of a one Living *Personal* God, essentially good, wise, true, and holy, the Author of all that exists. . . . In his [Teufelsdröch’s] state of mind, as there is no true sympathy with others, just as little is there any true peace for ourselves.’—John Stirling on Carlyle’s *Sartor Resartus* (*Life* by Carlyle, part II. chap. ii.).

<sup>1</sup> This passage, though seemingly polytheistic in tone, is cited on account of the remarkable testimony thus given by Plato to the fact that his observation convinced him that, in his own age and country, lifelong persistence in atheism was very rare. I offer the following translation:—

‘In the first place, I am confident that I shall not be convicted of falsehood, if I indicate to you on these matters one point of great importance. It is to this effect. Neither you nor your friends are the first persons who have held this opinion about the gods, but there always exist men, in number more or less, who are afflicted with this malady. I then, who have held intercourse with many of them, can tell you that no man who in youth had taken up the opinion of the non-existence of the gods, ever continued to old age his perseverance in this notion.’



## LECTURE II.

IN this lecture I propose to examine the contributions to the *a priori* argument made by St. Anselm. But it may be pardonable to indulge in one brief digression concerning some assumptions on my part which I have not yet noticed, but which are, I trust, legitimate. Any lecturer on such a theme must, almost inevitably, assume the importance of religion. Even if he does not recognize its claims to instruct us concerning a life to come, he can hardly fail to acknowledge that it has been, and is, a most important factor in the history of the human race. In speaking thus, it is by no means necessary to confine our thoughts to Judaism or Christianity. Let us take some country which we may look at apart from the influence of these religions. Look, for example, at Hindostan. In the annals of that land, so far as they are known to us, there is a

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Vedic period, there is a Brahmanic period, there is a Mohammedan conquest. Even to this day, the main subject thought upon, by those of its inhabitants who think at all, is religion. Somewhat similar remarks might be made respecting the history of any country, which has made a great and lasting impress upon humanity at large. Now I further venture to assume, as correct in the main, the views of those who assert that a religion must contain three principal elements. It involves some idea concerning a being or beings above us ; some ideas concerning human nature with its varied hopes and fears, faculties and aims ; and lastly, some idea concerning the connexion between these two. So closely are these three elements blended that any definite opinion concerning the one is generally found to affect the other two. Nevertheless, at different periods, one or other of these elements has been forced into much greater prominence than the others. Thus, to take a single example, the English Deists of the reign of Queen Anne dwelt specially on the question whether there had or had not been any of that special intercourse, commonly called revelation, between

the Creator and the creature. Consequently the great opponent of their system, Bishop Butler, hardly found it needful to dwell on the arguments which might be sought to prove the existence of an almighty framer of the Universe, for thus much was conceded by his adversaries. He was only concerned with the question whether this Creator had or had not made a revelation of Himself to mankind; and in the opinion of some thinkers, who have not been Theists,—let it suffice to name John Stuart Mill and his father,—he was quite triumphant on the field on which the contest was carried on.

In our own day, however, the controversy seems to turn less upon the question of revelation than upon the previous inquiry, whether there is or is not in any true sense a Creator at all. This consideration inspires me with a hope that the subject of these lectures, though it is one of all time, may be thought to have some special fitness for the age in which our lot is cast.

It is high time to speak of Anselm. On the details of his life and career it is impossible for me to dwell. It must be sufficient to remind

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my hearers that Anselm was born at Aosta, in Piedmont, in A.D. 1033, some thirty-three years before the Norman Conquest. Like so many great men—I may mention St. Augustine and St. Chrysostom—he owed much to the training and to the example of his pious mother Ermenberga. Somewhat against the wishes of his father (who, however, subsequently changed his views), Anselm resolved to choose the monastic life, and, after three years' wandering in France and Burgundy, took the habit and vows of a Benedictine of the convent of Bec, in Normandy. He was then twenty-seven years of age. Lanfranc, who had been the Prior of this house, first moved to Cannes, and was subsequently made Archbishop of Canterbury by William the Conqueror. Anselm succeeded Lanfranc in both of these stations, being made Prior, and subsequently Abbot of Bec; and, in the reign of William Rufus, Archbishop of Canterbury. It is no part of my subject to discuss the contests of Anselm with William the Second and his successor, Henry the First. I am here concerned with the career of Anselm as a thinker rather than as a man of action. It were easy to cite

testimonies of distinguished men of this century on behalf of the merits of St. Anselm as a thinker, as, for example, Möhler, De Remusat, Dean Church, and others; but I will here content myself with the brief description given by Dr. Thomson, the present Archbishop of York, which I rather choose because the writer will not be suspected of any undue predilection for the medieval church. Archbishop Thomson's words are as follows:—‘Perhaps no writer in the whole history of the Church has brought to the study of the philosophy of religion a keener intellect chastened by a faith more humble. “I do not seek, O Lord,” says he, “to penetrate Thy depths; I by no means think my intellect equal to them; but I long to understand in some degree Thy truth, which my heart believes and loves. For I do not seek to understand that I may believe; but I believe that I may understand.” And this noble aspiration was no mere phase of rhetoric. In the two ideas which he has contributed to the stock of Christian truth, namely, a proof more elaborate than had been attempted before, for the existence of God from the thought of God in the soul, and the proof

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from reason of the necessity and worth of Christ's redemption, we may witness that rare union of faith and philosophic acumen in which neither of them dwarfs nor destroys the other.'

With the treatise of Anselm on the Incarnation (the *Cur Deus homo*) we are not concerned, however great may be its interest and value in its own place. The contributions of Anselm to the *a priori* argument for the being of God consist of, firstly, a book of meditations of the sort for which Augustine had invented the name Soliloquy, but which Anselm preferred to call by a title derived from the Greek, *Monologium*. To this he added a shorter treatise which he called an Address (*i.e.* an Address to God), or *Proslogium*. Thirdly, we have a reply made by Anselm to the comments of a hostile critic, a monk named Gaunilo. The bulk of the whole of these writings is by no means great. In the folio edition of the Benedictines the whole three tractates, including the critique of Gaunilo, only occupy some forty pages.

The *Monologium* consists of seventy-nine short chapters, but of these considerably more than half must be excluded from our present

survey. The whole of the latter portion is derived, not from the teaching of men's natural reason and conscience, but from that of Holy Scripture. No doubt the assertion, made by Butler and others, that Scripture contains a re-publication of natural religion is one of much importance and interest, but it does not properly form part of my present subject, and I therefore confine myself mainly to a brief account of the first twenty-eight chapters of the *Monologium*.

Anselm writes, at the request of friends with whom he has often discussed the matter in conversation : 'If his reasonings seem to lack external authority, let them be at least accepted as valid until they are refuted. All men desire to enjoy only what seems to them to be good ; but good things are varied and innumerable. Still, do we not understand in all these varied goods some one quality, though its degree in this or that thing may be very unequal. A horse is good by reason of his strength, or again by reason of his swiftness. A robber is bad by reason of his possession of the very same qualities. But these qualities in the horse were useful, in the robber simply noxious. And not only things

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useful, but also those which are honourable and beautiful are always recognized. Do we not from the consideration of the various kinds of good rise to the contemplation of something from which their goodness flows ? That good alone can be supremely good, having nothing superior or even equal to itself ; and as supremely good, so also supremely great ; not necessarily great physically, but in a nobler sense, as when we speak of the greatness of wisdom. Ordinary goods around us arise out of other things that are good, but this supreme good must be good in itself, and prior to all these. We do not hesitate to recognise degrees of good. The horse is better than a piece of wood, and the man better than the horse ; but from the contemplation of these we rise to the conception of a goodness which is not subordinate to anything. Good of this kind cannot be imagined to exist in several equal natures. There must surely be one nature, or substance, or essence, which is in itself good and great, and through which alone anything else can become truly good or great.

The universe cannot have arisen out of itself. All men admit that from nothing nothing

springs. It may indeed have existed in thought before it was realized in fact, somewhat as words which we speak have previously existed in our minds. But, if the universe did not spring from nothing, it must have come from this highest excellence of a Divine artifeer, who is unlike human workmen in this, that he produces both substance and form. We have already spoken of this highest good as including in itself every form of excellence. We must not say he *has* justice, but he *is* justice. He is indeed the Supreme of essence, life, reason, health, justice, wisdom, truth, goodness, the Supreme of size, beauty, immortality, unchangeableness, blessedness, power, unity—in a word, the highest form of Life and Being.

Such a supreme excellence must be without beginning, for, if it had a beginning, it would derive it from something else, and that something would be so far its superior. Consequently it would not be the *highest* excellence. And as it is without beginning, so, too, without end. It could only come to an end against its own will or with its own will. But to come to an end against its will would betoken a lack of power,

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and in each case, not being omnipotent, it would not be the highest good. To come to an end with its own will would imply a want of goodness, as it would involve the ruin of all goodness, which is, in truth, dependent on itself. But then it would not be the supreme goodness; for that cannot possibly will the cessation of all goodness.

The same reasoning which shows that nothing like it can have been before it in the past, must convince us that nothing else like it can be in the future, for that future goodness would be an usurper on the rights of the supreme good. It is not limited by space or time, for in truth it constitutes both space and time. We may speak of it as an everlasting Now. Its existence is simple, absolute, and perfect. It does not admit of division or of solution.

Such is, I trust, a fair paraphrase of the leading arguments in the first part of the *Monologium*. I have drawn it directly and independently from the work itself. Similar *epitomés* have been given by others, as, e.g. by M. Bouchitté, De Remusat, and Köstlin. With-

out pausing for the moment to criticize the argument, I pass on to the consideration of the author's *Proslogium*. This is a much shorter production. Anselm hoped that it would be found less difficult than the former one. He places himself in the attitude of a person contemplating the Being and Nature of God, and seeking to understand what he believes, in fact he gave it for a second title 'Faith seeking Understanding' (*Fides quærens intellectum*). With some repetition it contains some additions to his former arguments. The second and two following chapters involve what has been called the ontological proof of Theism, and are specially Anselm's own. Thus, in chapter iii., he meditates on the extreme difficulty of conceiving the non-existence of God. Once allow that there exists something than which a greater cannot be conceived, the claim to imagine something better would erect the creature above this highest excellence, and make it the judge of its creator. The fool who says in his heart 'there is no God,' may succeed in a mere verbal denial, but this is very different from a disproof of the reality.

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The chief distinction between the argument of the *Monologium* and the *Proslogium* lies in this, that in the former and longer treatise Anselm dwells in a sort of inductive way on the idea of perfection, and from many forms of goodness infers, with Augustine, that there is a supreme goodness; while in the shorter one he argues immediately that our very power of conceiving such a *substratum* to all being is of itself a proof that it must exist.

When we speak of this Being as omnipotent, we imply limits to this extent, that He cannot do what is contrary to His own nature, or to the nature of laws which He has imposed upon Himself or upon the things created. Let us now proceed to the consideration of the force of Anselm's argument, of the objections raised to it from the days of Gaunilo to those of Kant, and the question how far it is original, and what must be its subsequent fortune.



## LECTURE II. (*Continued*).

IT is by no means uncommon to discover that elaborate arguments are based, though not always consciously, upon some one underlying principle. If the truth of this principle be admitted, then, although the correctness of details may be questioned, the general argument will most probably be accepted as valid. Similarly the negation of this underlying principle will prove fatal to the main bulk of the superstructure reared upon it, whatever may be thought of the value of some minor considerations. A third course is, however, possible. We may be willing to admit that the principle is applicable to some subjects, but not to others ; and the further question will then arise, *is or is not* the matter in hand one of those subjects ? Our decision on this last point will, of course, rule the acceptance or non-acceptance of the

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main argument which has been brought before us.

Now the underlying principle in the case of Anselm's argument has been asserted to be this, that the very fact of men's power of forming a certain conception proves the existence of the thing conceived. This principle has been attacked by men of great name, by Hobbes, by Huet, and by Gassendi, in the seventeenth century, and at a later period by Kant. On the other side, it may be said that both Hegel and Victor Cousin go a long way in the direction of acceptance of the principle, and defend the argument of Anselm. Another writer, M. Bouchitté, the author of a valuable monograph on the subject, declares that Anselm never intended to lay down this principle broadly, as if it were one generally applicable, but that he supposed it to hold good only in the exceptional case of the supreme and sovereign Being.

At this point I would venture to suggest a consideration less sweeping than that of M. Bouchitté. I do not claim for it any originality, but I fancy that it has not been so distinctly applied as it may be to the problem now before

us. The principle to which I refer is this, that the fact of our having a conception of a compound subject, especially a material subject, is of *no force* as an argument in favour of its existence. Thus, for example, we can form a conception of an unicorn; but here, though the aggregate may be utterly unreal, its two elements, the horse and the horn, *are* realities. An anatomist may tell me that the compound creature would be a monster. Still we know that it can be imagined, or else unicorns would never have been chosen as the supporters of the royal arms in Scotland.

But now proceed to a case which is not of a compound nor material nature. Take our idea of the soul. I believe that those are right who say that the mere fact of our possessing this idea is a strong argument on behalf of its truth. We cannot have combined it, as in the case of the unicorn, out of pre-existing notions, and in truth there is a marked limit in this direction to the power of the human imagination. Can we, for example, conceive an absolutely new colour which is in no wise combined of those already known to us? I should be prepared then to

accept the underlying principle of Anselm's argument, and to press it beyond the limits assigned to it by M. Bouchitté.

It may, however, be true that on certain details Anselm is only partially successful, or that he has failed to meet a difficulty, which did not occur to his mind as a possible one.

For example, Anselm does not seem to me to have stated with all the distinctness of which it was capable, the validity of our passage from a conviction that a self-existent substance exists, to the further conviction that this substance is endowed with Personality. Indeed at moments, and especially in one chapter of the *Proslogium*, he employs language which verges upon that representation of God, as the Spirit of the Universe, which confuses the Creator and the creature, and which is commonly known as Pantheism. Not for one moment do I suppose that Anselm intended to be pantheistic. He would probably, if he could be questioned, maintain, as Mr. Martineau and others of our own day have done, that law implies a law-giver, and that many of the attributes named in his argument can only be conceived in the concrete in con-

nexion with a personal Being. The force of what is called the ontological argument must be referred to again in a later lecture, but I must here take up the objection of Gaunilo, and then pass on to another point of considerable interest, to the question, namely, how far the argument of Anselm is on his part an original one.

What has been said to a great extent anticipates the objection of the monk, Gaunilo, to the *Proslogium*, and also Anselm's reply.

The comment of Gaunilo (which occupies less than a page and a half in folio) contains at its close a few lines of high eulogy of the *Proslogium*. 'It is,' says Anselm's assailant, 'eloquent, useful, and fragrant, deserving of all respect and praise.' But it needs, Gaunilo thinks, a strengthening in one point of its argument, that it may be rendered more complete. Gaunilo reasons somewhat as follows:— 'You, Anselm, maintain, in the first place, that some nature can be conceived than which there can be nothing greater; and, secondly, that such a nature must exist, not merely in thought, but in fact, for that if this were not so it would not be the greatest of all natures, since that which

exists, both in thought and in fact, must be greater than that which exists in thought only.' 'This reasoning does not convince me, Gaunilo. I deny that my power of conceiving, the best and greatest of all things, proves its existence. Take an illustration. There is a legend concerning a wondrous island, which, from the difficulty of discovering it, is by some thought to be lost. This island, the legend says, far surpasses all known islands in size, and in its abundance of riches and delights of every kind, though it may now have no possessor or inhabitant. Now, if any man told me that the mere conception of such an island indubitably proves its existence, I should be reduced to suppose him to be in joke, or else that one of us must be led into the greatest folly; I, if I granted his case, he, if he really thought that he had proved it.' Whatever objections may be made to Anselm's reasoning, this of his adversary, Gaunilo, is fairly, and I must think (with Professor Flint) triumphantly met by Anselm. His reply is in substance as follows, and is not devoid of a touch of humour, 'I, Anselm, only meant my reasoning to apply to natures having neither beginning

nor end, nor *conjunction of parts*. Just let any man show me an island than which I cannot conceive a greater nor a better. Let us suppose it, if you please, to be this lost one. Of that lost island I will make a present to him, by him to be lost no more.'

In a word, the idea of Anselm may be almost summed in the word Perfection. Such terms, it has been truly said, as *im-perfect*, *dis-ordered*, *un-just*, *power-less*, almost seem to imply an absolute standard. How can we pronounce any *thing* or person to be *im-perfect* or *un-just*, unless we have a real idea of some meaning attached to the words perfect and just? And this standard, by which we measure all defects, are we prepared to affirm that it alone is a non-entity? This at least is the main argument of the *Monologium*. In the *Proslogium* he discards this sort of quasi-inductive process by which the abstraction *goodness* is culled from all things which possess it. His appeal in the later composition lies rather to the fact that the idea of God is latent in every man, and that even the fool who denies God's existence unconsciously admits the idea of which he

takes upon him to deny the objective reality. My own opinion is that this argument does possess real weight, and I should be prepared to concede to it, a little more than is granted by Professor Flint. But I leave this to consideration of my hearers, and go on to the question how far the argument of Anselm is an original one. He himself distinctly states that it is not. He claims not merely to have advanced nothing inconsistent with the writings of the Fathers, but to have derived much from one who is generally recognized as the greatest teacher of the Western Church, St. Augustine. Perhaps Anselm, in his modesty, has hardly done himself justice. He is certainly the first Christian doctor who has given us a direct and formal treatise on the subject of the *à priori* argument for the being and attributes of God. But just as a sentence from the pen of Origen suggested the general plan of Bishop Butler's *Analogy*, so undoubtedly there are passages scattered through the works of Augustine, and notably one page in the eighth book of the *De Trinitate*, which may well have suggested to others, and especially to Anselm, the germ of the argument which he has de-

veloped. It seems only fair to Augustine to cite some of the leading sentences—‘ Lo ! thou mayest indulge another view of the matter. Assuredly, thou lovest nothing but what is good, for good is the earth in the loftiness of its mountains, and the proportion of its hills, and the level of its plains ; and good is an estate, pleasant and fertile ; good a house, arranged with due parts, and ample, and bright ; good are animals with their lively forms ; good the air that is pleasant and healthful ; good the food that is sweet, and that tends to health ; good the health that knows not pain or weariness ; good the face of man with its even dimensions, and cheerful glance, and rich colouring ; good the friend in the sweetness of sympathy and trustfulness of love with friend ; good the just man ; good is wealth, for it may be easily made serviceable ; good the sky, with its sun, and moon, and stars ; good the angels with their holy obedience ; good the address that pleasantly teaches and fittingly warns the hearer ; and good the poem that is harmonious in its measure, and weighty in its sentiments.

‘ But why go on with endless instances ?

Good is this, and good is that. Abstract this and that, and gaze if thou canst upon the absolute good. Thou shalt thus gaze upon God, who is good, not in one good point and another, but the good of all good. For neither in all these good things, whether those which I have named, or any other objects of perception or thought, could we say by a just judgment that one was better than another, unless there were impressed upon us the notion of the absolute good, as a standard by which we approve anything, and prefer one thing to another. In this wise is God to be loved, not as this or that good, but as the absolute good, for the good of the soul must be sought, not one over which in its judgment it may flutter, but a good to which in its love it may cling, and what is this but God? not a good soul, or a good angel, or a good heaven, but the good of good. . . . For changeful good could in nowise exist, but for the existence of the good that knows no change. This and that good of which thou hearest may be regarded as things not good, if thou couldest, apart from them which are only good by their participation in good, perceive that actual good by participation.

in which they become good ; in the very hearing of this or that good, thou understandest the notion of good absolute ; and if, when they are abstracted, thou canst perceive the good absolute, thou shalt have perceived God. And if thou shalt cling to it with love, straightway shalt thou be rendered blessed. . . . This is truth, and simply good, for it is nothing else than good absolute and therefore the highest good.'

The arrangement, the illustrations, and logical details in Anselm's succinct treatise are all his own, but such a passage as that just quoted must enable us to understand what Anselm meant, when in a general way he expressed his acknowledgments to Augustine.

But the question arises whether we must not go farther back still. Augustine always speaks with respect of Platonists and the Platonic philosophy. That the *a priori* argument may in some sense be traced back to Plato has been asserted by many able and learned thinkers. In the main I conceive the assertion to be correct, but we must carefully consider how much is involved in it.

It may be thought that we are bound to hold both the satisfactory character of the Theism taught by Plato, and a conscious identification on his part of an ideal good with a personal creator. But such a view is not necessarily incumbent on those who assert that Plato suggested the argument developed by St. Anselm; for many a thinker may suggest more than he himself sees, and may only have supplied certain elements of thought which it was left to others to combine.

Let us pause again for a moment to consider the leading replies which may be made to the question, Does God exist? There is the answer, 'He does not exist.' That is the speech of the Atheist. There is the answer, 'I do not know.' That is the answer of the Agnostics, concerning whom an Atheistic writer, Buchner, and the Positivist, Mr. Harrison, have just been speaking so contemptuously. There is the answer, 'There are gods many and lords many,' the creed of the Polytheist, which of course is not a real Theism, for no such being is God, not being almighty. Pallas, in Homer, may divinely aid Ulysses and Diomed in their theft of the horses of Rhesus;

but Apollo, though too late to save them, in so far thwarts Pallas as to retain the chariot. The Æolus of Virgil is lord of the winds, but he is roughly rated by Neptune for having allowed them to create a storm at sea. Manichæism, which makes two contending powers, instead of many, of course involves another denial of real Theism. The same must be said concerning those in our own day, who seem inclined to believe in a kind of supreme being who is not, however, perfectly powerful or perfectly wise or good. Such a being, however wondrous, is not, in any true sense, God.

The nobler spirits of western heathenism often fluctuated between Polytheism and Pantheism. The gods who were like men had a charm for the human heart, but alas! their likeness was supposed to include resemblance to man in his vices as well as his virtues. The deity of Pantheism was cold, abstract, and such as one could not worship, but it did possess the merit of seeming to be unsoiled by earthly passion.

The amount of veiled Theism which, nevertheless, abode in western heathendom, and from time to time asserted itself, was nevertheless by

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no means inconsiderable. It comes out in unexpected quarters. Not only does it often seem to be implied in grave authors such as Herodotus or Pindar, and in the noble hymn of the Stoic Cleanthes, but even Horace can conceive it, and Ovid, amidst all his sad laxity of tone, speaks with a distinctness concerning the Creator and the universe which, in such a man and in such an age, is truly surprising. The famous remark of Tertullian in his *Apologia* is both striking and true. He declares that the very heathen when in real distress were accustomed to cry out not ‘May Jupiter save me! May Apollo save me!’ but ‘God save me!’ and he adds, ‘O testimony of the soul by nature Christian!’ (*O testimonium animæ naturaliter Christianæ*).

For which of these varied theories are we to claim the support of Plato? A large number of Platonic students, including men of great name, would answer unhesitatingly that Plato was a believer in the true God, and the exponent of a real Theism. There are, however, those in our own day who seem inclined to maintain that Plato does not get beyond that doctrine of a spirit of the universe so largely

taught in India and in the West, which we call Pantheism.

Undoubtedly, in the case of an author whom we love, we are all tempted to put what seems to us the very best construction upon his language, to see what we wish to see, and to read into his words something more than he himself intended. The temptation is all the greater if the style of our author be at times highly poetic, and consequently susceptible of some variety of interpretation. Those who deny to Plato the position of a teacher of real Theism would probably be prepared to insinuate that the interpretation of their opponents was the result of Christian prejudices. It must not, however, in this connexion be forgotten that there does exist in some quarters such a thing as un-Christian and even anti-Christian prejudice. Willingly admitting, on my own part, the need of reconsideration of the nature of Platonic theism before dogmatically claiming for him an espousal of the cause of belief in its reality, I pass on for the present to positions which I conceive to be beyond dispute.

It will surely be admitted on all hands that Plato did distinctly teach the existence of an

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ideal good. Not only are his expressions on this point clear and unmistakable, but we have also the fact that his pupil, Aristotle, devotes a well-known chapter in the first book of his *Ethics* to an attempt at refutation of the Platonic doctrine that the attainment of this chief good was the true end and aim of man's existence. Many of us may think the Aristotelian objections somewhat captious ; but, whether this be the case or not, they testify to the fact that Plato had thus taught, and that supporters and opponents alike understood his general meaning.

It may suffice to give here a literal version of a few of the expressions used by Plato on this subject in the sixth book of his great work, the *Republic*.

' You have often heard,' he writes, ' that the idea of *the good* is the highest of all knowledge, by the use of which indeed things just, and other things of the kind, become useful and beneficial ' (p. 505). ' It is that which every soul pursues, and on account of which it does everything, perceiving by a kind of divination that such does exist, and yet hesitating because unable to gain a competent grasp of its nature, or an abiding

proof concerning it, such as he may attain to on other matters.' Presently Plato speaks of the many beautiful and good things in the world, but of the existence of something beyond them, namely, 'an absolute beauty and absolute good,' which, in fact, gives to knowledge and to truth, and to all good things, the good which they possess, being their very source and cause. This idea of the good, while the source of the being and essence of things good, is represented by Plato as in dignity and power something beyond and exceeding all substance.

There have not been wanting great scholars, who have considered that the pages, of which these are only brief specimens, are in their fulness and beauty inapplicable to anything short of God Himself; and that Plato intended his readers to think thus. I must own that I feel compelled, with Stallbaum, to regard this position as one not absolutely proven.

But if, as so many believe, we have in the *Timæus* and elsewhere language which distinctly asserts the being of the true God, may we not hold, not only that Plato (as Stallbaum and others think) regarded the ideal good and the

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personal Father and source of all things as inseparably connected, but that probably if appealed to by an Augustine or an Anselm, he might have been found willing to admit that their identification of the two things, the ideal good and the personal God, was neither an unreasonable nor an unlawful inference from the *data* which he had given. In any case, it is surely safe to suppose that the Platonic doctrine, even if unintentionally on the part of its author, does contain the germ, to say the least, of what in after ages was to be known of one main form of the *à priori* argument for the being and attributes of God.

## **LECTURE III.**

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‘There is an intelligent author of nature and natural governor of the world. For as there is no presumption against this prior to the proof of it, so it has often been proved with accumulated evidence from this argument of analogy and final causes, *from abstract reasonings*, from the most ancient tradition and testimony, and from the general consent of mankind.’—Bishop Butler, *Analogy of Religion* (Introduction).

‘Agnosticism is for the present the rival and antagonist of Positivism outside the orthodox fold. I say for the present, because by the nature of the case Agnosticism is a mere raft or jury-mast for shipwrecked believers, a halting-place, a temporary passage from one belief to another belief. The idea that the deepest issues of life and of thought can be permanently referred to any negation that cultivated beings can feel proud of, summing up their religious belief in the formula that they “know nothing;” this is too absurd to endure. Agnosticism is a milder form of the Voltairean hatred of religion that was current in the last century; but it is quite as passing a phase. For the moment it is the fashion of the emancipated Christian to save all trouble by professing himself an Agnostic. But he is more or less ashamed of it. He knows it is a subterfuge. It is no real answer. It is only an excuse for refusing to answer a troublesome question. The Agnostic knows that he will have to give a better answer some day; he finds earnest men clamouring for an answer. He is getting uneasy that they will not take “Don’t know” for an answer. And in the meantime he staves off questions by making his own ignorance—his own ignorance!—the foundation of a creed.—Frederic Harrison (*The Positivist*).



### LECTURE III.

If the argument, *à priori*, on behalf of the being of God has been suggested by Plato, re-stated by Augustine, and elaborated by Anselm, it surely presents some claim to be a part of the intellectual furniture of what has been sometimes called the great inspired mind of the world. At this point, however, two questions of some interest arise. The first is, Can we trace any external link of connexion, besides that of Augustine, between the Platonic and the Anselmian argument? The second is, What was the fortune of Anselm's tractates on this theme during the centuries which immediately succeeded him? To the first question it does not seem to me easy to reply with any great confidence. The one writer whose name has been suggested (especially by French critics) is that of Scotus Erigena. It has been suggested, firstly,

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that what remains of his writings does contain hints of the Platonic argument; and, secondly, that Anselm may have borrowed these hints, but have been unwilling to acknowledge the obligation on account of the bad reputation of Scotus Erigena on the ground of orthodoxy. I cannot say that our present evidence seems to me by any means sufficient to establish this view, though it is not absolutely impossible; since in all ages many great and good men have held it lawful to be reticent concerning the source of some true and brilliant suggestion, if they have thought that mention of the work whence it was derived would either spread the knowledge of what might do mischief, or else prejudice hearers and readers against an argument which in itself was sound and valuable. I should rather be disposed to suspect that many Platonic ideas became the property of the western intellect without their origin being suspected. It is curious to observe, in passing, that the story of the lost island, to which Gaunilo refers, occupies considerable space in the *Timæus* and the *Critias* of Plato.

The next point to be considered is, as has

been observed, how far the lines of argument adopted by Anselm made an impression on the mind of Christendom. Of course it may happen that succeeding ages are greatly occupied with problems of a different nature; and to some extent this probably came to pass as regards the case before us. The ages of the Crusades (so far as they were ages of thought as distinct from action) did not bring before the mind the problem of the being of God, for on that article of the creed the champions of the Cross and the Crescent were, theoretically at least, at one. Nor does it, I believe, find any place in the intellectual, or rather spiritual, duel between Abelard and St. Bernard in the first half of the twelfth century. But in the thirteenth century we naturally turn to the representative Christian thinker of his time, the famous schoolman, St. Thomas Aquinas. Did Aquinas (whose attempt at completing a *Sum of Theology* of course included the consideration of the proof of Theism) make use or not of the contributions furnished by St. Anselm?

Writers whose learning and ability give them a claim to our respect, seem to answer this

question rather differently. It has been said that Aquinas was with Anselm thus far, in that the very nature of knowledge seemed to him to show 'that knowledge was in man only through the dependence of the human intelligence on an underived and perfect intelligence.' Others, however, point out that at the very commencement of the *Summa* Aquinas appears to distrust, if not absolutely to reject the *à priori* argument. His language may at moments look as if he were making a special reference to the argument of Anselm, though in that case he may not have attended sufficiently to the distinctions already cited from Anselm in his reply to Gaunilo. But on the whole I am inclined to think that so far as Aquinas does employ the Anselmian argument, he does so all but unconsciously, and without any distinct sense of indebtedness to his predecessor.

The researches of a French writer, M. Jourdain, have pointed out a minor schoolman, Peter Auriol, as the one who has best appreciated the argument of Anselm; but, speaking in a rough and general way, it must, I think, be conceded that so far as regards anything like a widespread and acknowledged impression on theology, the lines of

thought traced by Anselm lay comparatively faint and unnoticed from the time of his decease in the twelfth century until the early portion of the sixteenth century. At that period, as is well known, the argument reappears in connexion with the name of a man of wonderful energy and versatility. Soldier, courtier, mathematician, metaphysician, theologian—René Descartes, in his own clear and trenchant style, again placed the Anselmian argument before the thinkers of Europe. With his feats of arms or his successes at courts we are not here concerned. Of his contribution to mathematics it must be enough to say that his discovery of the application of algebra to geometry in expressing by ordinates the nature of curves, is admitted by mathematicians to have been thoroughly original, and to exist as a treasure for all time. The questions connected with his metaphysical philosophy, and its effect on his own age and succeeding ages, may almost be said to possess a literature of their own.

We must here, however, confine ourselves to the immediate subject before us. Descartes, in his *Meditations*, devotes two out of the six to

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questions which concern the proof of the being of God. It is remarkable that they not only follow the lines marked out by Anselm, but that so far as Descartes' two meditations differ from each other, they differ in the same way as do the *Monologium* and the *Proslogium* of his predecessor the medieval archbishop. In the *Monologium* Anselm starts, as Augustine had done, with a reference to the many imperfect goods around us, and proceeds from them to the idea of the sovereign good. It must be admitted that in this argument there is some infusion of an *à posteriori* element, inasmuch as our knowledge of these imperfect goods is derived from experience. Anselm (as has been pointed out) was at least partially conscious of this, and he sought in the *Proslogium* to adopt a simpler process, which should be of a more purely *à priori* character. He argued from the very fact that 'the fool who saith in his heart there is no God,' did, in his very denial, recognize the idea of God; and, as we have seen, he argued from the existence of the idea to the existence of the reality. It is singular to find Descartes nearly six centuries later adopting the twofold form of argument.

It may perhaps be thought by some that the language of Descartes is clearer, simpler, and more free from digressions than that of the famous prelate who preceded him. Descartes does indeed try to make one more contribution to the argument, but it does not seem to be a happy one. He argues in his first meditation that it is not likely that the Being who has given us our means of investigation should have bestowed upon us gifts which are untrustworthy. But surely those are right, who urge that this consideration, however important in itself, is entirely out of place where it appears; for it assumes that existence of this very Being, the point which his opponents were supposed to deny.

To turn to the charge of plagiarism. There may be those who would be inclined to apply to Descartes the remark made by Johnson concerning Dryden, ‘His known wealth was so great that he could borrow without impeachment of his credit.’ No one questions the originality of Descartes in respect of many of his splendid discoveries in algebra and optics, and most would probably agree with Hallam in thinking

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that his metaphysical system, taken as a whole, is truly original. Sometimes science, especially mathematical and physical science, has reached a point at which it is highly probable that the next step will be taken, simultaneously and independently, by thinkers and investigators whose minds are employed upon these themes. This may, in some respects, have happened to Descartes. Nevertheless he is not free from the suspicion of having borrowed from predecessors and contemporaries without acknowledgment. Leibnitz has made a long list of charges of this kind. We must confine ourselves to the particular matter in hand; and here it does seem probable that, perhaps without deliberate and conscious adoption of the thoughts of Anselm, Descartes may have gained from his Jesuit instructors at the college of La Flèche at least a general idea of the line of thought which he subsequently pursued in his *Meditations*.

But whether or not Descartes was justified in his somewhat boastful assumption of perfect originality, it must be owned that the celebrity of his name and the excellence of his style, both in Latin and in French, combined with the

general spread of culture and education, tended to make far more widely known, than had hitherto been the case, the claims of the *a priori* argument for the being and attributes of God. From the date of the publication of the *Meditations* of Descartes, a long list of authors are found to have taken up the subject. Let it suffice to name Leibnitz himself, Cudworth (as representing the Cambridge Platonists), the Deist Lord Herbert of Cherbury, and the Jewish philosopher Mendelssohn. These, with many other writers, may have modified either the arguments or the way of setting them, but it is the Cartesian statement of the case with which they are mainly concerned. It must be added, as a fresh tribute to the effect produced by Descartes, that it is with him especially that Kant has done battle in his attempt to disprove the *a priori* argument.

Early, however, in the eighteenth century we meet with an English divine whose mode of treatment of the question, though resting on the same basis, seems to be fairly his own. Samuel Clarke delivered his course of Boyle lectures in 1704. It is remarkable, that while on the part

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of Anselm and of Descartes we do not know of any special thinkers against whom their reasonings were directed, it is otherwise with the case of Clarke. He specially names, at the outset of his work, Hobbes, and that one other powerful thinker who seems to me to have done more to sap the love of the living God in human hearts in the western world than any one man, the famous renegade from Judaism, Benedict Spinoza.

The line adopted by Clarke affords a fresh illustration of the great difficulty of constructing a purely *à priori* argument. Clarke begins with the idea of cause; and no doubt reasons to a great extent from experience—that is to say, *à posteriori*, in the structure which he upraises. The result is that some eminent thinkers have seemed disposed to contest the claims made for Clarke to a place in that list of reasoners, which includes the names of Anselm and Descartes. It is with real diffidence that I venture to take the opposite side in this matter, but I would call attention to the comments of the late Dr. Mozley (whom Sir James Paget, no mean judge, considers perhaps the most scientific of all recent theo-

logians), in his essay on *The Principle of Causation*.

I cannot help thinking that it may be possible, with Dr. Mozley's help, to state at least one phase of the argument of Clarke in a way which may fairly vindicate his claim to a place among those reasonings on this subject which are in the main *à priori*.

For to begin with, let us look for a moment at the idea of *cause*. It surely is one which the human mind discovers chiefly by looking inward, although events around may illustrate and bring out its significance. Kant is, I think, with me in asserting cause to be one of those simple and primary ideas, which are incapable of definition. It may arise from prejudice, but I can hardly think it worth while to take the trouble of attempting to refute that school of thinkers, who would resolve the idea of cause into that of mere uniform sequence. As has been well and often asked, does any sane person regard day as the cause of night because night always follows day? or again, if the rattle in the throat which so commonly precedes death were to become universal, instead of being merely general, would

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physicians gravely maintain that this symptom was the cause of decease?

Well, then, to adopt Dr. Mozley's way of putting the case, there must be a primary cause of all changes in phenomena, or else we must give up the notion of cause in the strict sense of the word altogether, and pronounce one of the fundamental ideas of the human mind to be nothing else but a delusion. No doubt we often, in practice, stop short of the ultimate analysis, because we have reached a point which is quite sufficient for our present purpose. But it will be found that our investigation commonly assumes two principles which in scholastic Latin may be stated thus—the one is, *causa causæ, causa causati*; the other, *causa ultima, sola vera causa*. An illustration may make my meaning clearer.

Looking out of window we see a dog pick up a piece of meat. Immediately afterwards it falls into convulsions and dies. We naturally rush to the conclusion that the meat had been poisoned, and if chemical analysis confirms our suspicions, we say in common parlance that the poison was the cause of the animal's death. A

friend, however, tells us that he saw a boy, whom he can identify, throw the meat out of a neighbouring window. We now speak of this boy as the cause of the dog's death, and may be inclined to help the owner in his desire to inflict punishment of some sort on the offender. But the boy, on being examined, convinces us that he was innocent. An elder person put the meat into his unsuspecting hands, and told him to throw it to the dog. We discover who this person was, and for the purpose in hand our analysis is complete. The intermediate steps are now regarded merely as so many links. *The cause of the cause* (to state in English the maxims before mentioned) *is the cause of the result (or thing caused)* and *the last cause is the sole true cause*. This criminal senior person is regarded in our judgment as the sole true cause, unless he can succeed in convincing us that the responsibility can be shifted farther back.

I submit to my hearers or readers that this reasoning does contain, to say the least, a large proportion of the *& priori* element, and that it has not been answered. It should be added as among the merits of Clarke's work that it dwells

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in more detail, than those of his predecessors, on the attributes of God, which may be deduced from this kind of reasoning. On Clarke's arguments derived from space and time I do not propose to dwell, because they do not seem to have been equally successful. In my concluding lecture I propose to give an account of the work of Mr. Gillespie; to call attention to other reasonings which, if I am not mistaken, are substantially in accordance with the principles involved in the *à priori* argument, to ask whether disputants on other lines of thought can really dispense entirely with *à priori* data, and to suggest, I hope with all due modesty, some features of the case which appear to require in our day a further discussion or elucidation.

## **LECTURE IV.**

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‘What we worship is the one God, who hath formed out of nothing this entire mass with all its furniture of elements, bodies, spirits, by the word of His command, by the plan of His arrangement, by the virtue of His power, for the adornment of His majesty ; and hence the Greeks have bestowed upon the universe the name of *κόσμος*, Order. He is invisible though He can be perceived ; incomprehensible, though made manifest through His grace ; beyond our powers of appreciation, though His worth is felt even by our mortal capacities of sense ; and therefore is He true and mighty. . . . But that which is boundless is thoroughly known to itself alone. And thus the very power of His greatness renders Him to men an object at once known and unknown. And this is the capital fault of men who are unwilling to recognize Him whom yet they cannot possibly ignore.’—Tertullian, *Apology*, (cap. xvii.).

‘When asked by the governors who was the God of Christians ? he said, “If thou art worthy thou shalt know.”—Potheinus, Martyr at Lyons in A.D. 180 (Eusebius, *Hist. Eccles.* lib. v. cap. i.).

‘Only love for the living God, and longing to be approved by Him is the scientific, as it is the Christian basis of morality ; and science will never find a firmer basis, nor life a surer.’—Lotze (cited by Cook, *Monday Lectures in Boston*, 1884).

‘My life will show the world what it shows me, that there is a loving God who arranges everything for the best.’—*Autobiography of Hans Christian Andersen*.



## LECTURE IV.

By the commencement of the nineteenth century the aspect of the *à priori* argument for the being and attributes of God had, I think, assumed a position of this kind. The labours of Anselm, Descartes, and Clarke had brought about a recognition of the importance of this mode of argument. Other distinguished men, if they had not made any great additions to the reasonings on its behalf, had at least stated the case in their own way, and had increased both the knowledge of the process and the respect paid to it; especially where they were able to attract audiences which might not have been so willing to lend an ear to the authors already mentioned. An illustration of my meaning may be afforded by the mere mention of the name of the Jewish philosopher Mendelssohn, the grandfather of the celebrated musician. As a Jew he may probably

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have interested many who would have paid less attention to works written by Christians.

This position remained for some time materially unaltered, and it is not difficult to mention authors—such as the French advocate M. Nicolas, Mr. W. Anchor Thompson, and Principal Tulloch among ourselves—who have given a certain amount of prominence to the *à priori* method in their able contributions to the philosophy of this fundamental doctrine. But in the meantime an acknowledgment, hardly less important in its way, had been bestowed upon it by the famous philosopher of Konigsberg, Emanuel Kant. Kant, while seemingly recognizing a sort of moral conviction of the being of God, yet attempted to refute in his *Critique of Pure Reason* the usual lines of argument. Still, he felt it as necessary to bestow his attention on the *à priori* as on the *à posteriori* argument, thereby showing that he considered each to have won its place in the literature of the subject. With Kant's reasonings against the argument from design I am not here immediately concerned, though I might again repeat my reference to the essay by the late Dr. Mozley. Of



Kant's criticism on the *à priori* method I have already spoken, and need only here repeat that, for my own part, I do not see why we may not accept the reply of M. Victor Cousin; provided that we limit that reply to those cases where an idea in the human mind (as, for instance, that of the soul) is not of a material character, nor of a kind that can be separated into parts.

In asserting that no great addition to the nature and the force of the *à priori* argument had been made, with the exception of the replies to Kant, I speak under correction. It might imply a more exhaustive survey of theological literature of the subject than I can pretend to have made, to be able to speak with absolute confidence. I am here stating the results of a general impression, and if it can be shown to be erroneous, I hope that I shall be found most glad and willing to correct it.

But, in the year 1833, a small volume exclusively devoted to this subject was published by a Scottish gentleman, Mr. William Honyman Gillespie of Torbanehill.

This work will probably be acknowledged, even by those who dissent from its reasonings,

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and who impugn either its conclusions, or at least the modes of reaching them, to have awakened fresh interest in the subject. The merits of Mr. Gillespie's work were freely recognized by the press, and it received warm eulogy from Lord Brougham, and from others of much higher authority in such questions, as Professor Macdougal, Principal Tulloch, and Sir William Hamilton. Let me first briefly state the general line struck out by Mr. Gillespie, and then mention what seem the most formidable objections to that line ; adding, however, certain considerations which prevent me from regarding them as in any wise fatal to the argument. I take up the sixth edition of the work, published in 1872, and offer the following epitome of its contents.

We have seen that Plato and Augustine started from the recognition of many sorts of goodness, whence we may arrive at the idea of the one Perfect Good. Anselm, and after him Descartes, elaborated this process of reasoning, attempting also some modifications and additions. In Clarke's system, though he may have failed to express it clearly, the starting-point seems to be the idea of Cause, which leads us upward to one

sole Great Cause. Mr. Gillespie takes a different starting-point. He begins with those great subjects of Space and Time, and, naturally assuming that we all recognize their importance, he argues for the Infinity of Space, or, as he prefers to call it, Infinity of Extension, not only as something existent, but as something necessarily existing. He next proceeds to argue that this Infinity of Extension is necessarily indivisible, and, in some sense necessarily immovable. From these positions he goes onward to the assertion of the necessary existence of a *Being* of infinity of extension; a Being possessed of *unity* and *simplicity*. The material universe being finite in extension cannot satisfy these conditions, and the Being who does satisfy them must necessarily be but one. The author then proceeds to treat the subject of Time in a way very similar to that in which he has treated the subject of Extension. He thus arrives at the conclusion that there is a Being of infinity of duration, and that there can be but *one* such.

The next step taken is to show the identity of the Being who possesses infinity of extension with the Being possessing infinity of duration.

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From the Being of God, established on these grounds, our author passes on to the consideration of the Divine attributes. His main divisions of these are into the Intellectual, the Moral, the Compound, and the Transcendant attributes. This portion of the work almost inevitably involves reflections concerning God, not only as He is in Himself, but as He is in relation to His creatures. Hence arise some attempts to adjust the connexion between morality and happiness, immorality and misery. The reasonings of this portion of the work contain some conclusions which, it seems to me, might be doubted, or even rejected, without prejudice to the main positions of Mr. Gillespie's treatise. They take us, however, from a region of purely intellectual and (some would say) cold propositions, into one where the author may exhibit, and certainly does exhibit, an extremely high tone of moral and religious feeling. The author dwells with great force, in a way calculated to impress us with awe and reverence, not only on the holiness and justice and the purity of God, but also on the terrible nature of sin in the creature, more especially of the sins of

rebellion and of impurity. Although the earlier portion of his argument rests on grounds of pure natural reason, in the latter part the author occasionally borrows the ideas and even the language of Revelation, though more by the way of illustration than of actual argument. Among the other Divine attributes which have been passed over or only glanced at in our brief epitome, ought to be mentioned those of perfect wisdom, perfect beauty, and perfect blessedness, in the highest sense of the word. Further, it is justly argued that from the entire attributes in their conjunction, there results an excellency or glory, far greater than can be expressed by the mere sum of the parts, because each one of the excellencies increases the action of all the others. This point is finely illustrated, and the natural conclusions respecting the proper attitude of the creature toward such a Being, the feelings of awe, dependence, trust, gratitude, and childlike love are most forcibly though briefly inculcated.

I ought perhaps to mention in passing, that, although I have here given an epitome of the sixth edition of this work, the other editions, though substantially identical in point of argu-

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ment, yet contain important matter in the way of explanation of some of the author's positions, and of examination and reviews of the arguments of other writers, conjoined with replies to attacks upon his own work. Most especially is this the case in the fourth issue out of the ten which were published, the one marked as the Russel edition.

The reasoners of whom I have chiefly spoken,—Anselm, Descartes, Clarke, Gillespie—are no longer with us. They were all doubtless prompted by the highest of human motives—a sincere desire for the glory of Him concerning whom they wrote, and for the best and highest welfare of their fellow-men. If, as common possessors of what Christians believe to be a fallen nature, these writers allowed any earthly alloy, such as the joy of a contest, or eagerness for victory on human grounds, ever to be blended, however unconsciously, with the promptings of a nobler self, all this has, we hope, entirely passed away. In the peace which we thoroughly trust they now inherit, they can desire nothing more than that their labours may continue to prove effective, so far, and so far only, as they

subserve the cause of truth. No criticism upon their productions can affect them, unless indeed they could suppose it to be injurious to the sacred cause which they upheld. And even here, it may be, that their keener vision might be permitted to discern that mistaken criticism would probably be, in God's good providence, overruled to good ; just as (to use a favourite idea of St. Augustine) the uprising of heresy has often ultimately led to a clearer perception and a fuller manifestation of true doctrine.

I have thought it very possible that the position which I occupied might tempt me, in the preparation of these lectures, to become a champion at all hazards of every position and inference contained in Mr. Gillespie's acute and able volumes. Let me say then that I should not like, without fuller consideration, to commit myself to all the positions contained in Mr. Gillespie's critiques of previous authors, and that there is one of the later inferences, rather outside the main argument, which I feel myself unable to accept. But after having tried to obtain, from opponents of Mr. Gillespie's leading positions, the utmost that can be said against him,

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the assaults leave me under the impression that they are unsuccessful.

For example, it has been said that the argument from space and time to a Being of infinite expansion and duration fails, when regarded from a Kantian point of view. Kant, as I am justly reminded, regards space and time as mere forms of sensibility, and as having no objective existence at all. Undoubtedly, from this point of view, Mr. Gillespie's argument falls to the ground.

But I am compelled to ask whether there is any real prospect of the victory on this subject falling to the philosophy of Kant. Fully admitting the great service rendered to us by Kant in many ways, and specially in his correction of the doctrine of Locke concerning the relation of knowledge to the human mind, we may still, with, I believe, the vast majority of thinkers, refuse to entertain his theory of the non-objectivity of space and time. Far from having taken up an anti-Kantian view for the sake of defending Mr. Gillespie, I may venture to remark that, forty years ago, I was taught to distrust Kant on this subject by a tutor who

was an eminent logician, and who has only been prevented by ill-health from obtaining a wide-spread reputation. This writer, in an *Essay on Logical Method*, published in 1848, has referred to 'those who admit Kant's very questionable view of time and space.' If the future impress of Mr. Gillespie's arguments can only be disannulled by the thorough acceptance of the doctrine of Kant, that impress will not, I believe, run any great risk of being effaced.

The view of space and time taken by Leibnitz may perhaps to some seem to be more plausible than that of Kant. Leibnitz regarded space and time as subsequent to substance, and generated by it. But may it not be said that if space and time are always and necessarily generated by substance, they may fairly be reckoned as properties of substance? And, in that case, should we not have the right to fall back upon a position, which is fortified by the high authority of Bishop Butler? Butler's words are as follows:—'Did it plainly appear that *Space* and *Duration* were *Properties* of a *Substance*, we should have an easy way with Atheists; for it would at once prove demon-

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strably an *Eternal, Necessary, Self-existent* Being; that there is *but One* such; and that he is needful in order to the existence of all other things.'

I am quite aware that Leibnitz would not admit the validity of Butler's reasoning. He maintained that not only were space and time subsequent to substance, but that they are merely the relations in which substances stand to each other, and, consequently, in themselves non-existent. With Bishop Butler I fail to see the necessary sequence of the positions thus set forth. Mr. Gillespie would probably have been well content to put against Leibnitz, great as he is, the support afforded by the words of Butler, which indeed he has quoted in his work.

A third and fourth assault are perhaps even subtler still. The first of these is the raising of the question whether, if we allow Mr. Gillespie's view of space and time as infinite entities, we have a right to apply to them the category of substance, and deduce from them the existence of a Being of infinite expansion and duration. Here, again, I venture to think that Bishop Butler comes to our aid. In a

passage of the *Analogy* we find him saying.—‘Abstract notions can do nothing. Indeed we ascribe to God a necessary existence, uncaused by any agent. For we find within ourselves the idea of infinity, *i.e.* immensity and eternity, impossible even in imagination, to be removed out of being. We seem to discern intuitively, that there must be, and cannot but be, somewhat external to ourselves, answering this idea or the archetype of it. And from hence (*for this abstract*, as much as any other, implies a *concrete*), we conclude that there is, and cannot but be, an infinite and immense eternal Being existing, prior to all design contributing to His existence, and exclusive of it.’—*Analogy of Religion*, part i. chap. vi.

It is further urged that if this last objection holds good,—which I, for one, am not prepared to grant,—another difficulty might be found to arise out of it. It is said that many, perhaps a majority, of metaphysicians and theologians hold that if space and time are infinite entities they would limit God himself, and so prove inconsistent with Theism. But here Mr. Gillespie might well, I think, have fallen back on the

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magnificent language employed by Sir Isaac Newton in the well-known passage towards the close of the *Principia*, where he speaks of God Almighty. “He is eternal and infinite, almighty and omniscient, that is to say, He endures from eternity unto eternity, and is present from infinity unto infinity. . . . He is not eternity and infinity, but eternal and infinite: He is not duration and space, but he endures and is present. He endures evermore, and is present everywhere, and by existing evermore and everywhere, *He constitutes duration and space.*”

Can it be illegitimate to argue from these infinite entities to the existence of the Being, who makes them what they are?

But it may be urged that this defence of Mr. Gillespie’s process of reasoning inflicts a blow upon its *à priori* character. If, it may be said, he has reasoned back from space and time to Him who has made them what they are, the argument is no longer a strictly *à priori* one. I have already admitted that it is difficult to avoid some importation of the lessons of experience, even into arguments intended to be of a wholly *à priori* character. But it surely may

be fairly maintained that, in arguing from space and time, we do look inward far more than outward. It is not a case of the *quasi-inductive* reasoning suggested by Plato and Augustine and adopted by Anselm, from the material things around us, but from prior and fundamental ideas, which are the condition of what is learnt from experience. If it be said that to speak thus implies a recurrence to the Kantian view of space and time, I should reply that I am entirely prepared to accept Kant's theory up to the point for which I have used it, and that I only resist it when Kant, not content with speaking of space and duration as fundamental ideas which are not simply derived from experience, goes on to insist on their being mere forms of sensibility, and being devoid of objective existence.

Here I conclude this imperfect survey of some of the arguments of some of the leading advocates for the cogency of the *à priori* mode of proof. I do not doubt but that an exhaustive account ought to enter into the nature of the contributions made by some other distinguished

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men, whose names I must mention presently. Such an attempt, however, would require a longer course of lectures than the present, and it may be doubted whether the gain in value would be proportionate to the increase in bulk.

But the object of any historic survey must be, I imagine, the showing forth, if possible, what has been done, the suggesting of something that has been overlooked, and which remains to be supplied ; and, lastly, the limitation of the range of the discussion involved in the indication of what can not be achieved by this process.

It is not to be denied that there have existed, and do exist, some very sincere Theists, who regard the *à priori* argument as either deficient, or, at any rate, as one that does not powerfully affect their own minds. Now, if any speak on this wise, ‘The argument does not come home to me ; I prefer the *à posteriori* line of reasoning, or even to rest on convictions which I cannot pretend to set forth in any logical form,’ I am not, at present, going to argue against this class of thinkers ; but if they say or imply that there is nothing at all in the *à priori* line of

reasoning, I must say they appear to me to take a somewhat bold, perhaps I may even say, a slightly presumptuous view of the matter. For, surely, it is something like presumption to say that there is nothing whatever in a line of thought which has been suggested by a Plato and an Augustine, elaborated by an Anselm and a Descartes; which has received more or less sanction from such men as Cudworth, Malebranche, Bossuet and Fénelon; as Cousin, Saisset, and Jules Simon; as Thompson and Principal Tulloch among ourselves, to say nothing of hints from the Stoic philosopher Cleanthes, and from Boethius. The guarded conclusions of the exhaustive studies of Professor Flint at any rate admit thus much, ‘It may be that the *a priori* arguments are faulty as logical evolutions of the truth of the Divine existence from ultimate and necessary conceptions, and yet that they concur in manifesting that if God be not, the human mind is of its very nature self-contradictory; that God can only be disbelieved in at the cost of reducing the whole world of thought to a chaos.’

And here, perhaps, I ought to say one word

on an underlying question, much mooted in our day. It is admitted by nearly all reasonable men that there do exist truths in the sphere of mathematics, and of metaphysics, which no one can deny without manifest absurdity. Is the being of God to be regarded as a truth of the same nature? I suppose it to be possible, (though Leibnitz, and perhaps Mr. Gillespie, are here against me) that we must answer this grave and solemn question in the negative. But I do not conceive that this admission is tantamount to an acknowledgment that reasoning has no place in the establishment of the great truths of religion, and of this one, the most fundamental of all. High authorities in the realm of physical science have, of late years, made large admissions respecting the number of truths which they are obliged to assume; truths, which yet cannot be ranked among the principles which admit of absolute demonstration; truths therefore which can be denied without palpable absurdity.

To return, however, to my more immediate subject. I have a few suggestions to offer in connexion with it. There are thinkers of our

day who, in contemplating the arguments for the being of God, are inclined to dwell largely, not to say exclusively, on the inferences deducible from conscience and the moral nature of man. This line of reasoning has commended itself to thinkers in very different theological camps. It was espoused, though perhaps with indifferent success, by Kant; it was a favourite one with Chalmers, and has also been employed by Erskine of Linlathen. It has been stated with remarkable force and clearness by Mr. Martineau, and has been powerfully urged by a Roman Catholic essayist, the late Dr. Ward, who was fond of illustrating and confirming his reasonings on this head by extracts both from the earlier and the later writings of Cardinal Newman. I doubt whether it is possible to state it more briefly and forcibly than Mr. Martineau has done in his *Studies of Christianity*.

'No ethical conceptions are possible at all, except as floating shreds of unattached thought, without a religious background; and the sense of responsibility, the agony of shame, the inner reverence for justice, first find their meaning and vindication in a Supreme Holiness that

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rules the world. Nor can any one be penetrated with the distinction between right and wrong without recognizing it as valid for all free beings, and incapable of local or arbitrary change. His feeling insists on its permanent recognition and omnipresent sway; and this unity in the moral law carries him to the unity of the Divine Legislator. Theism is thus the indispensable postulate of conscience; its objective counterpart and justification, without which its inspirations would be illusions, and its veracities themselves a lie.'

Most thoroughly, for my own part, do I acknowledge, and that with much gratitude, the force of this reasoning; but I should like to ask whether it must not be allowed to contain, to say the least, a strong infusion of the *à priori* element. It is surely not from mere experience, not by an extensive induction, but by looking inward, that we find those moral principles and laws of conscience which have been so much dwelt upon by the eminent men whom I have named. But if this be the case, is not the moral basis another form of the *à priori* argument? It dwells, it is true, upon

a different phase of the matter from that of the reasoners described by me, and one which, to many minds, may prove more attractive, and, consequently, seem even more cogent than the argument derived from our general notions of what is good, or from the idea of cause, or from our ideas of duration and space. But if the process of drawing inferences from it be similar in nature, those who adopt it ought to be grateful to the authors, who have helped to impress upon us the value of *à priori* reasoning in this matter.

But I have a further step to take. I have already twice admitted, and that ungrudgingly, the difficulty which we, who are so largely creatures of experience, find in keeping out of our calculations the intrusion of *à posteriori* elements of thought. Let me, however, ask whether it has not been generally overlooked that it is at least equally difficult for those who adopt the argument from design to exclude all *à priori* elements from their field of reasoning. For example, when we are told that Theism assumes causality, I must again ask—and Kant at least would be with me here—whether the

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very idea of cause is not *à priori*. And further, as a highly-gifted friend points out to me, the *à posteriori* argument ‘concludes from intelligence in nature to an intelligent Author or Being. It thus imports the idea of “Being,” and is thereby connected with the ontological argument,’ which is confessedly an *à priori* one. This is a point of view, which I would fain earnestly recommend to the careful consideration of all thinkers, who desire to prosecute still further researches into the arguments available for the being and attributes of God.

Another point which is sometimes, I think, in danger of being neglected, is the following. The great majority of those who believe in the cogency of at least some of the arguments for the being of God would be ready to admit that reasonings equally valid can be adduced for the existence of the soul as something distinct from the body, and also even on behalf of its immortality and its anticipation of future judgment. Might it not be well that essays on natural religion should include reasonings on these topics as well as on the Creator? For they surely form the complement of natural



religion, and might perhaps not only present it in a more attractive form, but likewise in one more likely to be well balanced and to be free from a certain one-sidedness, which the narrowing of the field of observation may occasionally induce.

Let me also express a hope that critics may be found to take in hand another deeply interesting problem of an *à priori* character : I mean the relation of what are often called 'necessary truths' to the Being of Him Who is emphatically the Truth as well as the Light and the Life.<sup>1</sup>

We have reason to be very grateful to all who have added to true knowledge on a theme than which none can be more important to our race. True ideas concerning God must lie at the foundation of all religion ; on this point we may gladly accept the words of John Stuart Mill, 'It is now acknowledged by nearly all the ablest writers on the subject that natural religion is the necessary basis of revealed, and that the proofs of Christianity pre-suppose the

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix B.

being and moral attributes of God.' But it seems impossible to deny the assertion so often made, namely, that natural religion, however firmly grasped by some eminent individuals in varied ages and countries, has not succeeded in maintaining its ground with the many. It appears to need some other aid over and above the appeal to right reason, and such aid Christians believe to have come, directly or indirectly, from revelation.

Grant the acceptance of a real Theism on grounds of pure reason, and you are still confronted with three questions concerning which natural religion is almost silent, or returns very hesitating answers. There is the existence of evil, the value of prayer, the possibility of the forgiveness of sin. Of the first of these problems revelation, it is true, does not offer any solution; but it does, at least, give hints and suggestions of a consoling and practical character. It points to the many proofs afforded by history, both sacred and profane, of the way in which virtues—witness patience, long-suffering, forgiveness, and others—emerge from trials, and allow even past evil to be overruled to good. It speaks of

God Himself, not standing aloof from the great mystery of pain, but condescending to share its worst forms—sin alone excepted—as regards the suffering both of body and of soul. And it seems to sanction reason in doubting whether the Creator could test the real allegiance of intelligent creatures, except by allowing them this dread gift of the freedom of choice between good and evil.

The heathen, as we know from many touching passages of their writings, and by the widely-spread practice of offering sacrifice to Beings above them, did hope that prayer might be heard and that sin might be pardoned. But Theism, standing alone, from the days of Plato to those of Rousseau, and even of Jules Simon and Mr. Greg, speaks most hesitatingly, to say the least, both concerning the value of prayer and the possibility of pardon, and at times seems to deny them both. How different on these heads is the ringing clearness of Revelation : ‘O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come’ (Ps. lxv.) ; and how gladly did the Hebrew praise his God as One that could and would forgive sin : ‘Who is a God like unto

thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy. He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea' (Micah vii. 18, 19).

I do not enter upon the subject of the way in which a further revelation has enlarged our knowledge concerning the grounds and means of forgiveness. But if any are inclined to think that mere Theism has an advantage over revealed religion in that it is free from mystery and difficulty, I would recommend to them a glance at the concluding pages of Bishop Watson's answer to Tom Paine, at the admissions on this head of John Stuart Mill, and at the reply to the *Religion Naturelle* of M. Jules Simon in the essays of the present Duc de Broglie. The last-named writer adds a reflection which may well engage our attention. He observes that up to a certain date in the world's history the preservation of Theism had been confined to comparatively a small portion of the globe. But an

event takes place,—‘Unto us a Child is born,’—and in a few years the republication of natural religion is found to be spreading over the face of the civilized world, and has from that time, despite occasional eclipses, never been thoroughly darkened, or for any long period overthrown. At the present moment many votaries of physical science, while declining to admit a real and vital Theism (such as that professed by Jews, Christians, and the earlier Mohammedans), seem inclined to acknowledge the presence of a mysterious Something, which lies behind the forces of the universe. An avowed and outspoken atheist, Buchner, tells them that this is of no avail. He declares that such admissions are sure to leave an opening for renewed belief in the Being of God ; and, terrible as his language is, I cannot say that it seems to me either unintelligible or even surprising. A person who has thoroughly accepted the account of this mysterious power, as taught by Mr. Herbert Spencer, might, it is to be hoped, be led onward to the plain and emphatic language which so many sages and devout minds have employed for long generations.

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Some time must perhaps elapse before we can see the results of such admissions, and of the able works in favour of Theism, which have been recently set forth in so many different quarters. It is by no means impossible that, in the course of a few years, there may be a change concerning the points at issue in that battle which Goethe declared to be ‘the proper, peculiar, and deepest theme of universal and human history, to which all others are subordinate—the conflict of belief and unbelief.’ Should this prove to be the case, there will ensue for a season, possibly not a short season, a certain amount of neglect, not only of the works of atheistic writers, from Lucretius down to La Mettrie and Buchner, but also of those written by the apologists for Theism, whether from the *a priori* or *a posteriori* point of view. But, as has already been seen, from time to time the great question, than which none can be more vital for humanity, namely, that which concerns the Being of God, will inevitably recur. New forms of attack will be invented by the restless fertility of the human mind, and possibly new lines of defence may have to be constructed by the champions of belief. But

they will surely do well and wisely if they try to make themselves acquainted with what has been done, and with what has been left undone, by thinkers of past generations, from the days of Plato to those of the age in which their own lot is cast. If these lectures may be permitted to suggest but a hint on either of these important topics to those who may feel called upon to take part in a contest so solemn and weighty, they will have achieved all which the author can venture to hope for, and have attained the main end which he aimed at and desired to secure.



## **APPENDIX**

**H**



## APPENDIX A.

As there are differences of opinion concerning the precise meaning to be attached to the phrase of 'a real Theism,' it seems right that the author, even at the risk of some repetition, should indicate more clearly and fully than he has done in the body of the lectures the sense which he attaches to these words.

The point may be elucidated (1) by a few references to schools of thought, or authors who do not seem to have attained to a true Theism; and (2) by a few specimens from authors who do appear to have thoroughly grasped, so far as human understanding can, what is implied in the word God.

(1) Those cannot be accepted as real Theists who have spoken of matter as something eternal and, consequently, coeval with the Deity. For one of the first attributes of God is almighty. Now, if there is anything which has existed co-eternally with Him, it has existed without His leave, and, therefore, He is not almighty. This error runs through a large portion of ancient philosophy. Indeed, the difficulty would be to make any tolerable list of classic thinkers who could be pronounced entirely free from it. It renders God not a true creator, but one who has 'merely fabricated the world, as men build houses of pre-existent

materials,' and is repugnant to the notion of the Divine all-sufficiency.<sup>1</sup> Dr. Mill, from whom I partially cite these last words, pronounces it to be the doctrine of almost all the later Theists among the Greeks, who were not Christians, of all the Indian theistical schools (except the Vedantic), particularly the Nyáya, and those of the Sankhya, that are not Atheists.

Equally must one deny the title of true Theism to the seductive and widely-spread error known as Pantheism. Pantheism makes God a mere soul of the universe and identical with it. It has, no doubt, had a great charm for many devout minds brought up in an atmosphere of Polytheism ; because they found in Pantheism a sort of refuge from the grosser elements of popular belief. Further, like most errors, Pantheism at some points verges on the truth ; for it is true that in Him who made us 'we live and move and have our being ;' it is true that in union with the Creator lies the highest bliss of the creature. But the true faith is, that the creature can never become *of one substance* with the Creator. By its vague and dreamy theology Pantheism has destroyed the historic sense in the land where it reigns most supreme—namely, Hindostan. Spinoza, its high priest in modern Europe, was also, according to Bunsen, 'deficient in the historic sense.' Many of the ancients—it may suffice to name Virgil—have seemingly used Pantheistic language in a religious spirit ; and the same is probably true concerning several Eastern poets and sages. But the identification of all human spirits with the great Creator-Spirit, thereby making all human action an act of the Deity, overthrows (as the Hindoos confess) the eternal distinction between right and wrong ; it obliterates the very idea of submission to a personal, independent Lord ;

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Mill's *Analysis of Pearson on the Creed.*

and perhaps Spinoza, who of all moderns has done most to popularize Pantheism in the West, has (as I have said) done more than any one man to sap in the European mind all true foundation for the love of God.

I do not dwell upon Manichæism, because the idea of two contending principles which are believed to be equal, or nearly equal, in power is inconsistent with the true divinity of either. It may have a certain plausibility for the unaided intellect; indeed otherwise it could hardly have entangled for eight years so powerful and gifted a mind as that of St. Augustine. Paulicianism, in the sixth century of the Christian era, was essentially a revival of the system of Manes, and there seems little doubt but that the Albigenses, like many of the ancient Gnostics, were more or less infected with the same error.

Within our own century it was thought by the elder Mill (as his son, J. S. Mill, informs us) to possess considerable attraction, and he wondered that it had not been revived. But it would surely be a waste of time to prolong any argumentative discussion in order to prove, what few would seriously deny, that Manichæism is essentially opposed to real Theism. If (a point which has been disputed) the Zendavesta really teaches this doctrine, it must share the same condemnation. ‘The Paulicians,’ says Gibbon, ‘dared to violate the unity of God, the first article of natural and revealed religion.’<sup>1</sup>

It is possible that a nearer approximation to truth may underlie that teaching of the ancient Egyptians to which some modern authorities<sup>2</sup> have given the name of Henotheism. In this system each thing worshipped—sun or

<sup>1</sup> *Decline and Fall* (chap. liv.).

<sup>2</sup> E.g. Mr. Le Page Renouf, in his interesting and valuable ‘Hibbert Lectures.’

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moon, cloud or tree—is regarded for the moment as the one representative of Deity. But it is obvious that such teaching would have a fatal facility of lapsing into idolatry, even if, on the part of its first teachers, it was not intended to be idolatrous.

All systems and teachings which fall short of the recognition of one great, sole Personal Being, to whom men must bow in reverent submission, must be pronounced to need the essentials of a real Theism. But how far the holders and teachers of such doctrines are blameworthy is, in each individual case, beyond the perception of merely human insight. Christians, of course, believe that there has been, and may be, error on this vital theme, for which its supporters and propagators are terribly responsible. For an apostle has declared that the heathen *ought* to have recognized the eternal power and Godhead of the Creator by the things that are made, and that a declension from such knowledge, when possessed, was inexcusable, because resulting from ingratitude and folly, and leading them on by a just punishment to the vilest moral corruption. Many Christian teachers have inferred from the famous passage in which St. Paul treats this problem that, although ignorance of revealed truth may be quite excusable, yet that ignorance of natural religion and, above all, of the Being of God must always be without excuse. But when we consider the surroundings, or (as some would call it) the environment of many of our fellow-creatures, whether in lands where the most debased forms of heathenism have long been dominant, or in the crowds of great cities, even in countries nominally Christian, it seems more just, as well as more charitable, to suppose that there may be an ignorance of even the elementary truths of religion which may have excuses, to be admitted, we trust, as such by Him

whom they have not known. Nor can it be held impossible that some persons may be practically classed with these, who, moving in circles unlike either of those just described, have been deliberately brought up by parents in unbelief even concerning the Being of God.<sup>1</sup>

The list of those who seem to have unintentionally erred, or to have used language not meant to mislead, is probably very large. Allusion has already been made to the religious temper of Virgil. Among modern authors one might point to Pope, who in his *Essay on Man* employs pantheistic language, but probably from mere shallowness or ignorance. It can hardly be denied that the far grander mind of Wordsworth did display, in all its earlier effusions, something of a pantheistic tinge. He rose out of this in his later years, but, as by that time his poetic fervour had abated, it rather unfortunately happens that some of his finest poetry is, in this respect, the least satisfactory. It is not, however, likely to work any harm to minds not predisposed to error, and the poet's language is nearly always patient of a good interpretation. Still, it may lend some countenance to those who are disposed to exult in anything that looks like a divorce between genius and faith.

A more recent work on Natural Religion by the author of *Ecce Homo* lies open, it must be feared, to similar strictures. The author himself may not only hold the main truths taught by Natural Religion, but may also

<sup>1</sup> Since the above was written I find Mr. Wilfrid Ward declaring that his father, the late Dr. Ward, had arrived at the conclusion that there *might be* invincible ignorance of the Being of God. One of the most learned of the Scottish Episcopalian clergy, the late Rev. George Forbes of Burntisland, impressed on me this conviction several years ago. Mr. W. Ward's remarks may be found in a note appended to his father's essays on *The Philosophy of Theism* (London, 1884).

be quite sincere in claiming to be a Christian. But he seems prepared to concede to the votaries of physical science, and perhaps to those of art, the validity of a creed which neither Jew, nor Mohammedan, nor Christian, can be prepared to accept. It is not true honesty nor true charity to keep silence on a matter so vital and essential; not true honesty, for it is claiming as virtual allies those who really occupy a different camp; not true charity, for it is leaving others to suppose they may be in the possession of solemn and life-penetrating verities, of which we really fear that they are devoid. To say all this is, however it may be trusted, not incompatible with thorough belief in the excellence of the intentions of the author of the volume to which we refer.<sup>1</sup>

That Agnosticism cannot be recognized as compatible with true Theism is a position which seems hardly to require proof. Of course there is a sense of the word which would only express the mental attitude of all Theists towards Him whom they worship. For such would grant most fully that their grasp of the ideas involved in the very meaning of the word God, must, in this life, be feeble and clouded; nay must, even in the world to come, be bounded by the limitations of the creature.<sup>2</sup> In the most comprehensive sense of the term, God alone can know Himself; but Theists do claim sufficient knowledge of God to be

<sup>1</sup> These remarks are fully corroborated by Principal Tulloch in his *Modern Theories in Philosophy and Religion*, and by Mr. Mallock in his *Atheism and the Value of Life*. Their criticisms were unknown to me when I wrote the above comments.

<sup>2</sup> The recognition of this aspect of the case by Christian teachers, including several of the early Fathers, has been well and clearly set forth by the Rev. Canon Curteis in an article in the *Nineteenth Century* for June 1884. It is also fully recognized in the able and temperate article on the proofs for the Being of God, by Dr. Standenmaier, in the *Encyclopaedic Dictionary* of Drs. Wetzer and Welte.

able to serve Him in ways well-pleasing to His majesty, ways expressive of their awe, reverence, submission, and trustful love. Compared with the ignorance expressed by Agnostics, in the modern sense of the term, the Theists' acquaintance with God may be really called knowledge, and in addressing heathen idolaters they can honestly employ the language of the Apostle, and say: 'Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you.'

What to Christian minds seems sad and distressing in the position of the ordinary Agnostic of our time is this. Christians believe, as in truth did many of the heathen, that all men must one day stand at a bar of judgment. It is surely a solemn thought, that any creature should have so spent its earthly life as to render itself liable to some sentence of the following import. 'Day by day, in matters of your earthly life, you acted earnestly and intelligently upon evidence, which you knew to be far from complete and demonstrative. In education, in the choice of a profession, in business, in art, and even in the pursuit of physical science, indeed in almost every department of thought and action, you were compelled to make assumptions which you could not at the moment verify. But the evidence for *My* existence, for *My* power, and *My* love, you rejected as insufficient, while all the time you were accepting far less cogent proof for the verity of the thoughts and words and deeds to which your inclinations led you. You have not served Me, nor submitted yourself to Me; of the justice of the verdict now to be passed upon you your own heart and conscience and intellect must now be in itself a fitting judge.'

(2) Having thus far stated negatively what can not be accepted as a true Theism, it may be well to give some

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specimens of what may be regarded as the expression of a real belief in God.

Such belief seems often to have remained, half-unconsciously, in minds where falsehood and superstition have grievously overlaid it, though not in such wise as entirely to destroy it. Hence the famous comment of Tertullian, to which I have made reference in these Lectures. The result is, that in heathen writings one sometimes misses the explicit expression of belief in Theism, on the part of authors in whom one might have hoped to find it, and who, possibly, did in reality hold it; while in other cases it seems to emerge, as it were in their better moments, from the heart of writers who would generally be considered, and with too much truth, as thoroughly imbued with sentiments degrading to all right ideas concerning the Godhead, sentiments carelessly epicurean, brutalizing, or avowedly anti-theistic.

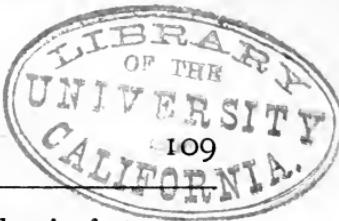
Thus, for example, even the careless and pleasure-loving Horace can at moments rise into a region of elevated thought, as when he sings the praises of the great Parent who rules things human and divine, earth and sea, and the world with its varied seasons, from Whom nothing greater than Himself has its origin; Who has nothing like to or even second to Himself, though Pallas [is not this the Divine wisdom?] has justly claimed the honours nearest to Him (Ode xii. in bk. i., lin. 13-28). Not less strange is it to discover at the commencement of a long poem, replete with lowering tales concerning the gods,—I mean the metamorphoses of Ovid,—a clear conception of a god, considered as a creator, bringing into order the rude mass of chaos, and at last (when sun and moon, earth and sea, cold and heat, and the animal creation in water, earth, and air had received their fitting place) creating something

which was lacking, a being holier than all these, with more capacity for lofty thought, and able to exercise lordship and dominion over all around him (lib. i. lin. 5-88). Cicero, though anticipating Paley, as I have observed, in the argument from a Clock (*De Naturâ Deorum*, lib. ii. cap. 38, § 97), and inclined to hope an immortality of bliss for great souls, is rightly, I think, regarded by Döllinger as a half-sceptical eclectic.

In Greek literature the Homeric poems at moments seem to assign to Jove a supremacy which verges on Monotheism, but which (a too common case), after all, makes fate superior to the Divine Will. Similar language might perhaps be used concerning the really devout and reverent teaching of Æschylus. The case of Pindar is, I think, doubtful. Herodotus appears to believe in a providence, and 'the Divine' is with him a common expression. He assigns to it personal attributes; but, unfortunately, a leading one is not merely a propensity to punish guilt, but an intense jealousy of human prosperity, even though its possessor may have been innocent in character. Sophocles is reverent, but seldom, if ever, seems to escape from Polytheism. Aristotle, though claimed as theistic by many able writers (as, for instance, by the late Father Gratry) is, in my judgment, pantheistic. Plato, in his higher moments, as in the pages of the *Timaeus*, I should have unhesitatingly claimed as capable of enunciating a real Theism. This decision has, however, been lately challenged by a distinguished Cambridge student of Plato, Mr. Archer-Hind, and I consequently feel it to be a duty to reconsider the question. The Greek Stoics, as a rule, were pantheistic, as indeed had been for the most part the earlier schools, as the Ionian and Eleatic. One must, however, except from the general judgment on the Stoics the noble name of

Cleanthes. This philosopher has not only left us an augmentative statement for the being of a God, but has addressed to Him a brief but splendid hymn, unexceptionable in tone, and full of reverence and beauty. He is probably one from whom St. Paul quoted the words (also employed by the Sicilian Aratus), ‘For we also are His offspring.’ ‘Τοῦ γὰρ καὶ γένος ἐσμέν.’

Another great name intervenes between Plato and Cleanthes which I have hesitated to introduce, because here also one cannot speak with confidence. I refer to Demosthenes. In one of the grandest passages of what must ever remain among the finest, perhaps actually *the* finest, of all orations, Demosthenes seems to me to mention Jove separately from the other supreme powers (as a Christian might speak of God and His Saints), and then to pass on and introduce ‘*the God*’ in such wise that Tertullian might have claimed him as a witness. I rather call attention to the passage, because I have never seen it noticed in this connexion. Possibly I am seeing what I wish to see. But the reader shall judge. The orator is arguing in a lofty strain that, even if Athens had known to a certainty that Philip of Macedon would triumph, she could not—looking back to her past history or to future ages—have tamely submitted and surrendered her liberties. ‘But since he [Æschines] insists so strongly on the subject of results, I wish also to say something on this head, even though it may sound like a paradox. And this I entreat, by Jove and the gods,—let no man simply marvel at it as an extravagance of speech on my part, but let him meditate upon it in a favourable temper of mind. Even if the future had been beforehand clearly manifest to all men, and all men had possessed this foreknowledge, and if you, Æschines, had foretold, and if you had uttered your testi-



mony aloud with shout and cry (you who, in fact, never uttered one syllable of remonstrance), not even under such circumstances could this state of Athens have by any possibility have stood aloof from interference if she retained any regard for her glory, for her ancestors, or for the ages yet to come. As matters stand, Athens seems to have suffered failure in policy—an event which is common to humanity *when such is the will of God*; but in the other case, first claiming to be leader of the rest of the Greeks and then abnegating her position, she would have incurred the guilt of having betrayed all her brethren in the hands of Philip.<sup>1</sup> Then follows the famous page in which the orator recalls the ancient glories of his country in her resistance to Persia, including the adjuration of those who risked all at Marathon and Platæa, at Salamis and Artemisium, to all of whom the state awarded the same honours of burial without reference to their special success or victory. ‘For so much as lay within the task of brave men, this they all of them accomplished, but they attained that amount of good or ill fortune *which the Deity assigned to each*.<sup>2</sup> It must be added that, in common with Socrates (as appears

<sup>1</sup> As I have translated the accessories of the point at issue somewhat freely, it seems right to subjoin the original:—

Ἐπειδὴ δὲ πολὺς τὸς συμβεβηκόσιν ἔγκειται, βούλομαί τι καὶ παράδοξον εἰπεῖν. Καὶ μου πρὸς Διὸς καὶ θεῶν, μηδεὶς τὴν ὑπερβολὴν θαυμάσῃ, ἀλλὰ μετ' εὐνόias, δέ λέγω, θεωρησάτω. Εἰ γὰρ ἦν ἀπασι πρόδηλα τὰ μέλλοντα γενήσεσθαι, καὶ προήδεσαν ἄπαντες, καὶ σὺ προίλεγες, Αἴσχινη, καὶ διεμαρτύρουσιν καὶ κεκραγώς (ὅς οὐδὲ ἐφθέγξω) οὐδὲ οὕτως ἀποστατέον τῇ πολει τούτων ἦν, εἰπερ οὐδέξις, οὐ προγόνων οὐ τοῦ μέλλοντος αἰώνος εἰλέτη λόγον. Νῦν μέν γ' ἀποτυχεῖν δοκεῖ τῶν πραγμάτων, δι πᾶσι κοινὸν ἔστιν ἀνθρώποις, θταν τῷ Θεῷ ταῦτα δοκῆ. τότε δέ ἀξιοῦσα προεστάναι τῶν ἀλλων, εἰτ' αποστάσα τούτου, Φιλίππω προδεδωκέναι πάντας ἀν ἔσχεν αἰτίαν.—*De Coronā*, § 154 (ed. Barker).

<sup>2</sup> "Ο μὲν γάρ ἦν ἀνδρῶν ἀγαθῶν ἔργον, ἀπασι πέπρακται, τῇ τύχῃ δε, ἦν οὐδέμιαν ἀπένειμεν ἐκάστοις, ταύτη κέχρηνται.—*De Coronā*, § 160. Thermopylæ, which was a defeat, would have been still more to the

from the *Memorabilia* of Xenophon, iv. 4), with Sophocles, with Aristotle, with Cicero (as cited by Lactantius), Demosthenes strongly asserts<sup>1</sup> the existence of ‘the work of the law written in men’s hearts.’ Speaking, in this same oration (§ 317), of principles which ‘even Nature herself has laid down in her unwritten laws and in the moral constitutions of men,’ the great orator has, either consciously or unconsciously, acted upon the excellent advice given to speakers by Plato in his *Phædrus*, that they should try to be in sympathy with their auditors, but, at the same time, endeavour to speak what is acceptable to the heavenly powers (pp. 273, 274). [Lest the chronological statements should seem too vague, it may be well to remind the reader that Plato was born B.C. 429, Demosthenes about B.C. 382 (or 385), and Cleanthes about B.C. 300.]

Passing from Greece and Rome to other bodies of men, also outside the pale of Judaism and Christianity, it must be repeated that the earlier Mohammedans were unquestionably Theists; nor is it easy to see how one who accepts the Koran as a divine revelation can be anything else. To open the Koran almost at random constantly brings us across passages like the following:—‘God! there is no God but He, the living, the self-subsisting; neither slumber nor sleep seizeth Him; who is he that can intercede with Him but through His own good pleasure?’ (chap. ii.)<sup>2</sup>

point, but Demosthenes could hardly perhaps in such a connexion venture to refer to one of the glories of Sparta.

<sup>1</sup> I allude to the beautiful speech of Antigone (450-57), which is cited with approval by Aristotle in his *Rhetic*. For reminding me of Demosthenes and Socrates I have to thank Mr. J. A. Beets in his excellent *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* (4th ed., p. 77), London, 1883.

<sup>2</sup> It is not necessary here to enter into the question how far the Theism of Mohammed is an original or a derived doctrine. Although the Arab teacher may have had scarcely any direct acquaintance with

But the creed of Islam, like most other creeds, has been much modified by the habits and traditions of some of the races who profess to have adopted it. Thus, in Persia the poets known as Sufis embody a mystic teaching which is deeply tinged with Pantheism. This tone, however, is so thoroughly alien from the spirit of the earlier Moslem teachers that one of their theologians, by name Gazali, declared that it was more pleasing in the sight of God to slay one of these pantheizing mystics than to give life to ten men.<sup>1</sup>

At this point it seems right to observe that as, on the one hand, there will always be those who do not act up to the teaching and spirit of a true creed, or who even, in Pauline language, 'hold the truth in unrighteousness'; so also, on the other hand, there have been, and still are, both individuals and bodies of men who are better than their creed, and of whom one feels inclined to think more hopefully than of many whose knowledge is clearer and nearer to the truth. Thus, for example, the elder Pliny, who, in his *Natural History*, speaks scoffingly of things divine and the idea of a life to come, yet, in his devotion to duty and his ardour for scientific truth, might put to shame many believers in holier things. Pliny certainly met his death as a martyr to science and a martyr to philanthropy; and one cannot but trust that one who died for his fellow-men may have had his soul irradiated with some better light in

the Bible, there can be little doubt but that he was largely imbued with its teaching, especially that of the Old Testament, though it may have been at second-hand. Möhler, who has fully recognized the thorough sincerity and devotion of the Koran, yet insists most strongly on the derivation of its essential purport from the Old and New Testaments.

<sup>1</sup> Pococke, *Specimen Historiae Arabum*. Cited in Döllinger's essay, *Muhammed's Religion*. Ratisbon, 1838.

his closing hours. Thus too, again, in Hindostan one might expect to find the Mohammedan population in a more hopeful condition than the Hindoos. But impartial observers who have visited India or have lived in it, generally seem to speak more favourably and hopefully of the Hindoos than of the Moslem in that land ; though it remains true that in certain countries Mohammedans (*e.g.* the Malays) do act as missionaries to idolaters, and thereby exhibit an amount of spiritual life which is not displayed by Buddhists or Brahmins.

The eager interest in religion displayed in Hindostan is well brought out in the striking tale *A City of Sunshine*, by Mr. Allardyce;<sup>1</sup> and some of the more favourable aspects of Hindoo religion have been set forth by Professor Monier Williams, by the Rev. K. M. Banerjea, by Mrs. Speir, by the late Mr. J. B. Morris, and the Rev. Rowland Williams ; and (as regards Buddhism) by Bishop Milman and others. Nevertheless, the history of this home of Pantheism seems clearly to bring out the following drawbacks to such a creed. In the first place, it appears to destroy the historic sense. Even cultivated Hindoos are ignorant of history ; and it is impossible to settle the date of any single work in Sanskrit. It does not satisfy the needs of the many : they fall back upon a gross form of idolatry, insomuch as that while the central soul of the universe is represented as untainted by evil, those incarnations of the Supreme Being which have appeared on earth are not supposed to be subject to the moral law. A convert from Brahmanism to Christianity, now member of an Anglican brotherhood, the Rev. Father Goreh, has commented with just sadness and severity on a Brahmanic prayer in which the god Indra is invoked

<sup>1</sup> I have to thank Mr. Allardyce for the loan of a book by Mr. Banerjea, which I had not previously seen.

by the title 'O adulterous lover of Ahallya' as an endearing appellation. Mr. Ward, a Baptist missionary, has used even stronger language than that of Father Goreh, declaring that in writing his account of Hindooism he was often obliged to stop short, as it was impossible to pollute his pages with such filthiness as he had seen in Hindoo books and had heard from Hindoo priests. I do not like to quit this subject without citing a portion of the criticism of the actual state of Hindostan by one who had spent there some of the best years of his life, and who did not approach the subject with what many might think the bias of a missionary, but with the eye of a politician and a man of letters.

'As this superstition [the Hindoo popular religion] is of all superstitions the most inelegant, so it is of all superstitions the most immoral. Emblems of vice are objects of public worship. Acts of vice are acts of public worship. The courtesans are as much a part of the establishment of the temple, as much ministers of the god, as the priests. Crimes against life, crimes against property, are not permitted but enjoined by this odious theology. But for our interference human victims would still be offered to the Ganges, and the widow would still be laid on the pile with the corpse of her husband, and burned alive by her own children.'<sup>1</sup> And again, 'the conversion of the whole people to the worst form that Christianity ever wore in the darkest ages would be a most happy event. It is not necessary that a man should be a Christian to wish for the propagation of Christianity in India. It is sufficient that he should be an European not much below the ordinary European level of good sense and humanity. In no part of the world

<sup>1</sup> *Speeches of the Rt. Hon. T. B. Macaulay* (London, Longmans, 1854), pp. 274, 275.

is heathenism more cruel, more licentious, more fruitful of absurd rites and pernicious laws.<sup>1</sup>

If in Hindostan the Mohammedans are inferior to the Hindoos, it must be remembered that competent judges inform us that Mohammedanism differs greatly in different lands, and that India may not be in the present day one of its best specimens.

I now come to the theistic teaching of those who, according to Christian belief, have written under the influence of Divine inspiration. On descriptions of what is implied in the teaching of the Old Testament concerning God I do not dwell for the moment, as I shall presently have occasion to cite two summaries of this nature. It must here be enough to say that the Jewish nation, whether in its own small realm of Palestine, or in foreign homes, as Babylon and Alexandria, and, in short, in all lands whither its sons have been scattered, has proclaimed Theism with a clearness, a persistency, and a defiance of persecution, which can scarcely be said, unless it be in these latter days, ever to have faltered. Even if there be truth in the charge that large numbers of them did, especially in Spain, pretend to be Christians, while remaining Jews at heart, such conduct, however sad and hypocritical, would of course in no wise involve the forfeiture of their Theism. Where even brilliant thinkers of their race, such as Spinoza, have virtually or openly denied Theism, the synagogue has at once broken with such. It is easy for men who have no earnest faith to sneer at the forms of excommunication adopted in such a case as that of Spinoza; but without any wish to defend uncharitableness, it must be remembered that earnest men cannot but feel strongly concerning any tenet which they

<sup>1</sup> 'Essays' from the *Edinburgh Review*. By T. B. Macaulay. Essay on Gladstone's *Church and State* (Longmans, 1854).

conscientiously regard as the ‘life’s life of their being,’ and that they might really hope that their language of horror would shock and startle an erring brother, and by arresting his downward course prove itself in the end to have been an utterance of true charity.

Direct quotations from Holy Scripture are here presumed to be unnecessary. It is almost needless to add that the writings of men nurtured upon these are replete with effective and eloquent passages concerning the being and attributes of God; I propose to quote a few which have struck me by their terseness, by their fulness, or by their pathos; though my small selection may probably betray, on my part, much ignorance or want of judgment. The following passage from the *Philosophumena*, ascribed to Hippolytus, embodies a clear statement of the relation of the Creator to His works.

‘The one God, the first and only One, Maker and Lord of all things, had nothing coëval with Himself; no boundless chaos, no measureless waste of waters or extent of barren land, no dense atmosphere, no glowing fire, no subtle breeze, nor blue vault of the mighty skies; but He endured alone by Himself, and by His will He caused to exist things heretofore non-existent, save only that He willed to make them as one endowed with full experience of results: for to Him belongeth foreknowledge also.’<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> As this treatise is not very accessible it may be well to subjoin the original.

Θεὸς εἰς, δὲ πρῶτος καὶ μόνος, καὶ ἀπάντων ποιητὴς καὶ κύριος, σύγχρονον ἔσχεν οὐδὲν, οὐ χάος ἀπειρον, οὐχ ὕδωρ ἀμέτρητον ἢ γῆν στερβάν, οὐχὶ ἀέρα πυκνόν, οὐ πῦρ θερμόν, οὐ πνεῦμα λεπτόν, οὐκ οὐρανοῦ μεγάλου κυανέαν δροφήν· ἀλλ’ ἦν εἰς μόνος ἐαντῷ, ὃς θελήσας ἐποίησε τὰ δυτα οὐκ δυτα πρότερον, πλὴν διτὶ ἡθέλησε ποιεῖν ὡς ἔμπειρος ὁν τῶν ἑσομένων, πάρεστι γὰρ αὐτῷ καὶ πρόγνωσις.—S. Hippolyte Episc. et Mart., *Refutationes omnium Hæresium librorum decem quae supersunt.* (Ed. Duncker et Schneidewin, Gottingæ, 1859), lib. x. cap. 32.

It is almost needless to say that the works of St. Augustine are replete with passages of much beauty and eloquence on this lofty theme. It may suffice to select a brief specimen from his *Confessions*, which has somewhere, I think, been translated by Bishop Jeremy Taylor : ‘What then art Thou, O my God ? For what do I ask except for Thee, O Lord God ? For who is Lord beside the Lord ? Or who is God beside our God ? O most high, most excellent, most powerful, most almighty, most merciful, and most just, most hidden and most present, fairest and strongest, stable and incomprehensible, changeless yet changing all things ; never new, never old ; making all things new, yet leading into decrepitude the proud, though they know it not ; ever in action, ever at rest ; gathering together, yet not in want ; bearing, filling, and protecting ; creating, nourishing, and completing ; seeking, though nothing is lacking to Thee. Thou lovest, yet art devoid of passion ; Thou art jealous, and yet art undisturbed ; Thou repentest, and yet dost not sorrow ; Thou art angry, and yet remainest calm ; Thou dost change Thy works, yet dost not change Thy plan ; Thou dost recover that which Thou findest, and yet hast never lost ; never art Thou needy, and yet Thou rejoicest in gains ; never art Thou avaricious, and yet Thou requirest interest. Free-will offerings are made to Thee that thou mayest owe, and yet who hath anything that is not thine ? Thou payest debts which yet are owed to no man ; Thou givest dues, yet without losing anything. And what have I said, O my God, my life, my holy charm ? Or what indeed does any man say when he speaks of Thee ? And woe to those who are silent concerning Thee, since even those who speak are dumb.’—(*Confessions*, book i. cap. iv.)

It might be possible to cull many noble sentiments from

hymns and books of meditations of the Middle Ages; though some authors of that epoch have perhaps written more beautifully on the Incarnation and on Redemption than on the immediate subject before us. Anselm is, perhaps, one of many to whom this remark is applicable, and possibly also Thomas à Kempis, the reputed author of the *Imitatio Christi*. In selecting a grand passage from Dante I have, as on so many other points, been anticipated by Professor Flint, but I do not like to omit it.

Dante (like Anselm in the latter part of the *Monologium*) has perhaps too much dwelt on the revelation of God as given to Christians to be cited as giving a description of what is involved in Theism considered by itself. But I venture to quote some portion of the earlier passages in the *Paradiso* (xix. 40-45, 52-63), though I must leave my readers to look out for themselves the wondrous vision of the Holy Trinity and the Incarnate Lord, with which the poem concludes :

‘ He

Who turn'd His compass on the world's extreme,  
And in that space so variously hath wrought,  
Both openly and in secret ; in such wise  
Could not through all the universe display  
Impression of His glory, that the Word  
Of His omniscience should not still remain  
In infinite excess.'

That is, as Cary (whose rendering is here given) rightly interprets, ‘the divine nature still remained incomprehensible.’ The poet then refers to the fault of the rebel angels, who would not wait for further light, but fell through pride ; and proceeds :

‘ Whence needs each lesser nature is but scant  
Receptacle unto that Good, which knows  
No limit, measured by Itself alone.

Therefore your sight, of the omnipresent Mind  
 A single beam, its origin must own  
 Surpassing far its utmost potency.  
 The ken your world is gifted with, descends  
 In the everlasting Justice as low down,  
 As eye doth in the sea ; which, though it mark  
 The bottom from the shore, in the wide main  
 Discerns it not ; and nevertheless it is  
 But hidden through its deepness.<sup>1</sup>

Father Gratry, one of the few learned clergy of the modern French Church, will also be found to furnish much that bears upon the present work in his two small volumes entitled *La Connaissance de Dieu*, where may be seen short extracts from Malebranche, Fénelon, Bossuet, and others. From Sir Isaac Newton I have already quoted a part of the grand passage near the close of the third book of his

<sup>1</sup> ‘Colui che volse il sesto  
 Allo stremo del mondo, e dentro ad esso  
 Distinse tanto occulto e manifesto,  
 Non poteo suo valor si fare impresso  
 In tutto l'universo, che il suo verbo  
 Non rimanesse in infinito eccesso.

E quinci appar ch' ogni minor natura  
 E corto recettacolo a quel bene  
 Che non ha fine, e sè in sè misura.  
 Dunque nostra veduta, che conviene  
 Essere alcun de' raggi della mente  
 Di che tutte le cose son ripiene,  
 Non può di sua natura esser possente  
 Tanto, che suo principio non discerna  
 Molto di là, da quel ch' egli è, parvente.  
 Però nella giustizia sempiterna  
 La vista che riceve il vostro mondo,  
 Come occhio per lo mare, entro s' interna ;  
 Che benchè dalla proda veggia il fondo,  
 In pelago nol vede, e nondimeno  
 Egli è, ma cela lui l'esser profondo.’

*Principia*—a passage which has won the just admiration of foreigners, such as M. Nicolas, as well as of British theologians.

Among authors of this century three have, I conceive, been eminently successful in setting forth the cycle of the leading ideas comprised in our utterance of the word God. Two of these, it is true, are only engaged in setting forth a summary of the Hebrew teaching on the subject, but they seem to have effected this task with much precision and completeness. I refer to Strauss, the author of the *Leben Jesu*, who thought it right to describe a doctrine, which he was endeavouring to overthrow. Here his effort to be fair has, as I have implied, been in the main successful. The second writer of whom I am thinking is the lamented Arthur Hallam, known to most only as the subject of the Laureate's *In Memoriam*, but deserving, I must maintain, of a fuller recognition than he has yet received on the ground of his own merits. The third writer, whose description is of a more general character, is Cardinal Newman, in his *Discourses on University Education*. As it is highly probable that my readers may not have these works at hand, it may be well to cite them here.

The following extract from the *Life of Christ* by Strauss seems important, from its clear presentation of the wide difference between the Theism taught in the pages of Holy Scripture and the feeble grasp of what is implied in Theism displayed by many, who either lack the courage or the perception requisite for the admission that their creed is limited and illogical, even if it be not in reality that of Agnosticism or of dogmatic Atheism:—

‘In the ancient world (that is, in the East) the religious tendency was so preponderating, and the knowledge of nature so limited, that the law of connexion between

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earthly finite beings was very loosely regarded. At every link there was a disposition to spring into the infinite, and to see God as the immediate cause of every change in nature or the human mind. In this mental condition the Biblical history was written. Not that God is here represented as doing all and everything Himself—a notion which, from the manifold evidence of the fundamental connexion between finite things, would be impossible to any reasonable mind—but there prevails in the Biblical writers a ready disposition to derive all things, down to the minutest details, as soon as they appear particularly important, immediately from God. *He it is who gives the rain and the sunshine ; He sends the east wind and the storm ; He dispenses war, famine, and pestilence ; He hardens hearts and softens them, suggests thoughts and resolutions.* And this is particularly the case with regard to His chosen instruments and beloved people. In the history of the Israelites we find traces of His immediate agency at every step. Through Moses, Elias, Jesus, He performs things which never would have happened in the ordinary course of nature.

‘Our modern world, on the contrary, after many centuries of tedious research, has attained a conviction that all things are linked together by a chain of causes and effects which suffers no interruption. It is true that single facts and groups of facts, with their condition and processes of change, are not so circumscribed as to be unsusceptible of external influence ; for the action of one existence or kingdom in nature entrenches on that of another ; human freedom controls natural development, and material laws react on human freedom. Nevertheless the totality of finite things forms a vast circle, which, except that it owes its existence and laws to a superior power, suffers no intrusion

from without. This conviction is so much a habit of thought with the modern world that in actual life the belief in a supernatural manifestation, and immediate Divine agency, is at once attributed to ignorance or imposture. It has been carried to the extreme in that modern explanation which, *in a spirit exactly opposed to that of the Bible*, has either totally removed the Divine causation, or has so far restricted it that it is immediate in the act of creation alone, but mediate from that point onward—*i.e.* God operates on the world only in so far as He gave to it this fixed direction at the creation. From this point of view, at which nature and history appear as a compact tissue of finite causes and effects, it was impossible to regard the narratives of the Bible, in which this tissue is broken by innumerable instances of Divine interference, as historical.

‘It must be confessed, on nearer investigation, that this modern explanation, although it does not exactly deny the existence of God, yet puts aside the idea of Him, as the ancient view did the idea of the world; for this is, as it has been often and well remarked, *no longer a God and Creator, but a mere finite artist*, who acts immediately upon his work only during its first production, and then leaves it to itself—who becomes excluded, with this full energy, from one particular sphere of existence.’<sup>1</sup>

Strauss, it is to be feared, placed himself in his later day upon a lower level in point of faith than even the low one described in the above remarkable passage. It is interesting to compare the treatment of some of the same propositions at the hand of a believer in the Theism proclaimed in Scripture. Accordingly, we turn to the pages—few but

<sup>1</sup> Strauss’s *Life of Christ*, Introduction, § 14 (vol. i. pp. 70-72 in English translation).

precious—bequeathed to posterity by the lamented Arthur Hallam.

‘What is the distinguishing character of Hebrew literature which separates it by so broad a line of demarcation from that of every ancient people? Undoubtedly the sentiment of erotic devotion which pervades it. Their poets never represent the Deity as an impassive principle; a mere organizing intellect removed at infinite distance from human hopes and fears. He is for them a Being of like passions with themselves, requiring heart for heart, and capable of inspiring affection, because capable of feeling and returning it. Awful, indeed, are the thunders of His utterance, and the clouds that surround His dwelling-place; very terrible is the vengeance He executes on the nations that forget Him; but to His chosen people, and especially to the men “after His own heart” whom He anoints from the midst of them, His “still small voice” speaks in sympathy and loving-kindness. Every Hebrew, while his breast glowed with patriotic enthusiasm at those promises, which he shared as one of the favoured race, had a yet deeper source of emotion, from which gushed perpetually the aspirations of prayer and thanksgiving. He might consider himself almost in the presence of his God; the single being to whom a great revelation had been made, and over whose head “an exceeding weight of glory was suspended.” His personal welfare was infinitely concerned with every event that had taken place in the miraculous order of providence. For him the rocks of Horeb had trembled, and the waters of the Red Sea were parted in their course. The word given on Sinai with such solemn pomp of ministration was given to his own individual soul, and brought him into immediate communion with his Creator. That awful Being could never be put away from

him. He was about his path, and about his feet, and knew all his thoughts long before. Yet this tremendous, enclosing presence was a presence of love. It was a manifold everlasting manifestation of one deep feeling—a desire for human affection. Such a belief, while it enlisted even pride and self-interest on the side of piety, had a direct tendency to excite the best passions of our nature. Love is not long asked in vain from generous dispositions. A Being, never absent, but standing beside the life of each man with ever-watchful tenderness, and recognized, though invisible, in every blessing that befell them from youth to age, became naturally the object of their warmest affections. Their belief in Him could not exist without producing as a necessary effect that profound impression of passionate individual attachment, which in the Hebrew authors always mingles with and vivifies their faith in the Invisible. All the books in the Old Testament are breathed upon by this breath of life. Especially is it to be found in that beautiful collection, entitled the Psalms of David, which remains, after some thousand years, perhaps the most perfect form in which the religious sentiment of man has been embodied.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Remains.* Essay on Signor Rosetti. Although it is an *excursus* in some measure outside the province of this volume, I cannot but think that some readers may be glad to see a portion of the continuation of the above passage.

‘But what is true of Judaism is yet more true of Christianity, “*matre pulchra filia pulchrior.*” In addition to all the characters of Hebrew Monotheism, there exists in the doctrine of the Cross a peculiar and inexhaustible treasure for the affectionate feelings. The idea of the Θεάνθρωπος [God-man] the God, Whose goings forth have been from everlasting, yet visible to men for their redemption as an earthly temporal creature, living, acting, and suffering among themselves, then (which is yet more important) transferring to the unseen place of His spiritual agency the same humanity He wore on earth, so that the lapse of generations can in no way affect the conception of His identity; *this is the most powerful thought that ever addressed itself to*

For the sake of brevity I omit some portions of the sketch given by Cardinal Newman, retaining enough, however, to afford a fair idea of its general character.

‘By theology I simply mean the science of God, or the truths we know about God put into system; just as we have a science of the stars, and call it astronomy, or of the crust of the earth, and call it geology.

‘For instance, I mean—for this is the main point—that as in the human frame there is a living principle acting upon it and through it by means of volition, so, behind the veil of the visible universe there is an invisible intelligent Being, acting on and through it, as and when He will. Further, I mean that this invisible Agent is in no sense a soul of the world, after the analogy of human nature, but, on the contrary, is absolutely distinct from the world, as being its Creator, Upholder, Governor, and Sovereign

*a human imagination.* It is the  $\piον\sigmaτω$  [the standing point] which alone was wanting to move the world. Here was solved at once the great problem which so long had distressed the teachers of mankind, how to make virtue the object of passion, and to secure at once the warmest enthusiasm in the heart, with the clearest perception of right and wrong in the understanding. The character of the blessed Founder of our faith became an abstract of morality to determine the judgment, while at the same time it remained personal and liable to love. The written word and the Established Church prevented a degeneration into ungoverned mysticism, but the predominant principle of vital religion always remained that of self-sacrifice to the Saviour. Not only the higher divisions of moral duties, but the simple primary impulses of benevolence, were subordinated to this new absorbing passion. The world was loved “in Christ alone.” The brethren were members of this mystical body. All the other bonds that had fastened down the Spirit of the Universe to our narrow round of earth were as nothing in comparison to this golden chain of suffering and self-sacrifice, which at once riveted the heart of man to One, Who, like himself, was acquainted with grief. Pain is the deepest thing we have in our nature, and union through pain has always seemed more holy and more real than any other.’

Lord. Here we are at once brought into the circle of doctrines which the idea of God embodies. I mean then by the Supreme Being, one who is simply self-dependent and the only Being Who is such; moreover, that He is without beginning or eternal, and the only eternal; that in consequence He has lived a whole eternity by Himself, and hence that he is all-sufficient, sufficient for His own blessedness and all-blessed and ever-blessed. Further, I mean a Being who, having these prerogatives, has the Supreme Good, or has all the attributes of God in infinite greatness; all wisdom, all truth, all justice, all love, all holiness, all beautifulness; who is omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent; ineffably one, absolutely perfect; and such, that what we do not know and cannot even imagine of Him, is far more wonderful than what we do and can. I mean one who is sovereign over His own will and actions, though always according to the eternal rule of right and wrong which is Himself. I mean, moreover, that He created all things out of nothing, and preserves them every moment, and could destroy them as easily as He made them; and thus in consequence He is separated from them by an abyss, and is incomunicable in His attributes. . . . His are all beings visible and invisible, the noblest and the vilest of them. His are the substance and the operation, and the results of that system of physical nature into which we are born. His, too, are the powers and achievements of the intellectual essences on which he has bestowed an independent action and the gift of origination. The laws of the universe, the principles of truth, the relation of one thing to another, their qualities and virtues, the rules and harmony of the whole, all that exists is from Him; and if evil is not from Him, as assuredly it is not, this is because evil has no substance of its own, but is only the defect, excess, perversion,

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or corruption of that which has. . . . The primary atoms of matter, their properties, their mutual action, their disposition and collocation, electricity, magnetism, gravitation, light, and whatever other subtle principles or operations the wit of man is detecting or shall detect, are the works of His hands. From Him has been every movement which has convulsed and refashioned the surface of the earth. The most insignificant or unsightly insect is from Him, and is good in its kind ; the everteeming, inexhaustible swarms of animalculæ, the myriads of living motes invisible to the naked eye, the restless overspreading vegetation which creeps like a garment over the whole earth, the lofty cedar, the umbrageous banana, are His. His are the tribes and families of birds and beasts, their graceful forms, their wild gestures, and their passionate cries.

‘And so in the intellectual, moral, social, and political world. Man, with his motives and works, his languages, his propagation, his diffusion, is from Him. Agriculture, medicine, and the arts of life, are His gifts. Society, laws, government, He is their sanction. The pageant of earthly royalty has the semblance and the benediction of the Eternal King. Peace and civilization, commerce and adventure, wars when just, conquest when humane and necessary, have His co-operation, and His blessing upon them. . . . “He enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world.” His are the dictates of the moral sense, and the retributive reproaches of conscience. To Him must be ascribed the rich endowments of the intellect, the radiation of genius, the imagination of the poet, the sagacity of the politician, the wisdom (as Scripture calls it) which now rears and decorates the temple, now manifests itself in proverb or in parable. The old saws of nations, the majestic precepts of philosophy, the luminous maxims of law, the oracles of

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individual wisdom, the traditional rules of truth, justice, and religion, even though embedded in the corruption, or alloyed with the pride of the world, bespeak His original agency, and His long-suffering presence. Even where there is habitual rebellion against Him, or profound far-spreading social depravity, still the undercurrent, or the heroic outburst of natural virtue, as well as the yearnings of the heart after what it has not, and its presentment of its true remedies are to be ascribed to the Author of all good. Anticipations or reminiscences of His glory haunt the mind of the self-sufficient sage, and of the pagan devotee: His writing is upon the wall, whether of the Indian fane or of the porticoes of Greece. He introduces Himself, He all but concurs, according to his good pleasure, and in His selected season, in the issues of unbelief, superstition, and false worship, and changes the character of acts by His overruling operation. He condescends, though he gives no sanction, to the altars and shrines of imposture, and He makes His own fiat the substitute for its sorceries. He speaks amid the incantations of Balaam, raises Samuel's spirit in the witch's cavern, prophesies of the Messias by the tongue of the Sibyl, forces Python to recognize His ministers, and baptizes by the hand of the unbeliever. He is with the heathen dramatist in his denunciations of injustice and tyranny, and his auguries of divine vengeance upon crime. Even on the unseemly legends of a popular mythology He casts His shadow, and is dimly discerned in the ode or the epic as in troubled waters or in fantastic dreams. All that is good, all that is true, all that is beautiful, all that is beneficent, be it great or small, be it perfect or fragmentary, natural as well as supernatural, moral as well as material—comes from Him.' (*On University Education.* Discourse III. Dublin, 1852.)

It is right to add that, as on the one hand some authors have professed Theism while falling short of what such a profession should include when rightly understood, so, on the other hand, we occasionally meet with assertions which seem somewhat extravagant in the enlargement of the meaning of the term, and with accusations of Atheism, which have been unfairly directed. An example of the first-named fault occurs in a recent number of the *Dublin Review*, where one of the contributors to that serial writes as follows: ‘We are far from saying that the religion of our fellow-countrymen is not, as far as it goes, a *good* thing, but how many of them, in their millions, believe in the Trinity, or in the Divinity of Christ, or in sin and grace? And the man who does not believe in these things cannot believe in God, in the true and catholic sense of that word.’ (No. for July 1884, p. 147, Art. ‘Pope Leo XIII. and the Freemasons.’)

I do not pause to discuss the profound and interesting question how far real belief in God, such as may be taught even by *natural* religion, prepares the mind for the reception of sublime verities, such as those of the Holy Trinity, and the Incarnation, which have only been learned from *revealed* religion. But it is obvious that to include in the idea of Theism truths not explicitly known before the dawn of the Christian revelation must exclude from the ranks of Theists not merely Mohammedans, but also the spiritual forefathers of Christians—the patriarchs, kings, prophets, and people of the older covenant, of whom we are assured that ‘these all died according to faith.’

I have been anxious in these Lectures to write in the spirit of a founder of earlier date, the celebrated Robert Boyle, who enjoined those elected to his lectureship to discuss fundamental truths of religion, ‘not descending lower

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to any controversies that are among Christians themselves.' I have derived great assistance from the works of Christians of almost every leading denomination, from Fathers and Schoolmen, from Lutherans, from Presbyterians, Anglicans, Roman Catholics, and even from Unitarians. It is, consequently, in no polemic spirit that I make the above quotation from the *Dublin Review*. If I were inclined to controvert it in detail, I should begin by appealing to the very opposite language employed by such writers as Father Gratry and Cardinal Newman.

Two other forms of an unreal character of *quasi-Theism* ought perhaps to have been more fully noticed, though they hardly deserve it. The one is the creed of men who accept the doctrine of a Supreme Creator and Governor of the universe, but do not allow that He is omniscient and omnipotent. Such a being is not in any true sense God: and a devout Theist feels instinctively that he could not cherish towards such a Creator any approximation to real faith and reverence, submissive awe or childlike trust.

The other form is that of the kind of Agnostic, who says, 'I do not know whether God has conscious intelligence.' A being who has not conscious intelligence is no God to me: He is my inferior and not my superior. The fact of my possessing conscious intelligence at once places me above any substance not similarly endowed. 'I am.' says Pascal, 'a reed, but a reed that can think.'

## APPENDIX B.

IT has been intimated that I am desirous of following, however humbly and distantly, in the steps of the author of the *Advancement of Learning*, who not only reports what has been achieved in the various departments of knowledge, but also sets down those which appear to him deficient. My survey, however, unlike that of Bacon, is a comparatively narrow one.

The literature on the relation between science and religion is becoming an immense one. How much of it will survive must be a question for posterity. On one side it touches the question treated in these Lectures, namely, where it is admitted that an *a priori* element is involved in the discussion of the points at issue. Illustrations abound. I must be content to refer to Mr. Balfour's *Philosophic Doubt*, and to a paper read before the *Victoria Society* by Bishop Cotterill.

There is one department of this subject which seems to me to be well worthy of further investigation by competent thinkers. I refer to the question of what have been often called (I believe justly) necessary truths. Their nature has been stated and explained by Kant, Hamilton, Mansel, M'Cosh, and many others. Some, like M'Cosh and the late Dr. Ward, have shown their intimate connexion with the argument for the being of God.

It would, I think, be accepted as a fair statement of the case, if I were to say that these eminent writers recognize three conditions of a necessary truth ; namely (1) that it be of such a nature as to be recognized as true by all persons of fairly sane and developed intellect ; (2) that it carries along with it its own evidence ; (3) that it be of such character as that we cannot conceive a state of things in which it should cease to be true.

These truths have been believed to be especially prominent in the realm of metaphysical, moral, and mathematical science. Metaphysical, *e.g.* ‘No change can take place in phenomena without a cause.’ Moral, *e.g.* ‘I am bound to restore to my friend, on his demand, a thing which he entrusted to my charge.’ Mathematical, *e.g.* ‘Things which are equal to the same are equal to each other.’ ‘Two added to two equals four.’

Assaults are at this moment being made upon all three of these alleged specimens of necessary truth.

A man of the first rank among lecturers on physical science, Professor Helmholtz, declares that ‘he tries to impress upon his pupils, whenever he can, the principle that “a metaphysical conclusion is either a false conclusion or a concealed experimental conclusion.”’<sup>1</sup> Metaphysicians may find it necessary to accept this challenge. I quoted the words of Helmholtz to a distinguished Edinburgh professor (not the occupant of a chair of mental science), and he gave me, by way of reply, the following comment, ‘that means that he is a metaphysician, and a metaphysician of a bad school.’ This comment I believe to be as true as it is pithy. The words of Helmholtz remind me of persons who denounce all casuistry as pernicious and sophistical, and

<sup>1</sup> *Popular Scientific Lectures* (Second Series), English Translation, p. 234. London, Longmans and Co., 1880.

then in the same breath proceed to discuss the question whether this or that species of amusement is or is not lawful for a Christian man to indulge in ; a question which in any case must needs involve the whole principle of casuistry.

2. Necessary truth in morals may be described in the admirable words of Dr. Martineau, which I have already quoted. ‘Nor can any one be penetrated with the distinction between right and wrong, *without recognizing it as valid for all free beings, and incapable of local or arbitrary change.*’ Many will remember the story told by Herodotus of the Spartan Glaucon, son of Epicydes, who, having received a deposit, afterwards denied the fact, and then consulted the oracle at Delphi. The solemn answer warned him that *for merely having thought of such a deed* (though he was penitent and did not carry it out in practice) his race should utterly perish. And this, says the historian, came to pass. The Roman satirist, Juvenal, a writer not too favourable to Grecian literature, singles out this narrative for special approbation.<sup>1</sup>

We are told that the doctrine of Evolution saps this certitude. Now I am, I believe, correct in asserting that the great teacher of Evolution, Darwin, never asserted his own view to be more than an hypothesis. The Professor of Botany in Edinburgh, Mr. Dickson, has declared his conviction, as a man of science, that it is an hypothesis ; which, however ingenious, is thus far non-proven, and that it is one which, in all probability, never will be proven. Virchow, the first pathologist in Europe, if I understand him rightly, endorses the first part of Professor Dickson’s verdict. Is it not then a little too early to plan attempts at reconciliation between the foundation of morals and an unproven theory ?

<sup>1</sup> Herodotus (lib. vi. cap. 86) ; Juvenalis (Sat. xiii. 202).

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In saying this I fully recognize what Mr. Darwin himself allowed—namely, that the theory of Evolution, *as taught by him*, is quite compatible with Theism, and that many religious men seem inclined either wholly or partially to adopt it, among whom are Dr. Asa Gray, Bishop Cotterill, the Rev. David Greig, possibly also Mr. Mivart and Mr. Justin McCarthy. With the last-named writer I entirely believe that the hypothesis of Evolution may be held in such wise as not to interfere with true religion, natural or revealed. Nor does it seem to me at all inconceivable that the Creator of all things may have so ordered them as that, when matter reaches a certain stage, mind may supervene. Consequently I should be sorry to rest any cause upon such a basis, as that a proven instance of *abiogenesis* would destroy it.<sup>1</sup>

3. There remains the question of necessary truth in mathematical science. This branch of knowledge was by many regarded as the very stronghold of illustrations of the very meaning of the phrase *necessary truth*. And in such light it is still regarded in many quarters. Let me cite a recent instance. In Bishop Temple's *Bampton Lectures* for 1884 we read the following:—‘We attach, and cannot help attaching, a conviction of necessity to all mathematical reasoning. We not only know that two straight lines cannot enclose a space, but we know that this is so, and must be so, in all places and at all times, and we know it without any proof whatever’ (p. 15).

In the next page the view of John Stuart Mill, that the conviction of the necessity of mathematical truth is a

<sup>1</sup> Hence I am compelled, with regret, to admit the existence of a certain distrust of that brilliant and wondrously popular work by Professor Drummond, *Natural Law in the Spiritual World*, though in many ways it seems to have done much good.

delusion is set aside (justly, I conceive, so far as Mill's reasoning is concerned) on the ground that it fails to account for all the facts.

But a more formidable (I do not say a finally successful) assault proceeds from another quarter. It comes from the distinguished mathematicians and physiologists who are teaching what is termed non-Euclidean geometry. Their case against the necessary character of at least some of the axioms of geometry may be read in the Lectures of Helmholtz already quoted, and in a paper read before the Royal Society of Edinburgh, in October 1880, by the occupant of the Chair of Mathematics in the University of Edinburgh, Professor Chrystal.<sup>1</sup>

Is it possible that the question concerning the existence or non-existence of necessary truth may become, in certain minds, mixed up with the question of the Being of God? Several thinkers, men of diverse training and temperament, would answer this question in the affirmative. We may name, for example, the late Dr. G. Ward, Dr. McCosh, and others. But a more pertinent example is at hand. The late William Kingdon Clifford, having in youth been a sincere believer in Christianity, became an ardent atheist—so ardent that a man of large and varied attainments, both in physical science and other departments of knowledge, has been heard to say that Clifford seemed to him like one who would really like to persecute Christianity. He persuaded himself that all knowledge is derived from experience. ‘He saw, however,’ to quote the words of Mr. Mallock, ‘that there was one great difficulty in the way of this theory, and that was the necessity and the universality

<sup>1</sup> This paper (re-printed and published by David Douglas, Edinburgh, 1880) was read at the request of the Council of the Royal Society of Edinburgh.

of the truths of geometry.<sup>1</sup> From this difficulty he attempted to escape, and persuaded himself that he had escaped by enthusiastically adopting the opinions of the non-Euclidean geometers, Lobatchewsky and his followers. Clifford maintained that this school had proved that geometrical truths are neither necessarily nor universally true now, and that in the remote past they may not have been true at all. Hence Clifford argued that the change was one of transcendent importance, being, in fact, a change in our conception of the cosmos. ‘Were,’ he says, ‘the Euclidean assumptions true, the constitution of the universe at an infinite distance from us would be as well known as the geometry of this room, so that here we should have real knowledge of something at least that concerns the cosmos—something that is true throughout the immensities and eternities. That something Lobatchewsky and his followers have taken away.’ Clifford hence argued that we have no reason for believing in an immaterial soul, and no parallels by which to illustrate and support a belief in a theological intuition.<sup>2</sup>

We need a scientist (one who, like Descartes, is competent to handle problems metaphysical as well as mathematical) to discuss the real relation between the non-Euclidean geometry and the question of necessary truth. The author of the *Bampton Lectures* for 1884 might well undertake such a task, if the supervision of the see which he now holds can leave him any leisure for its accomplishment. Meanwhile it may be observed that the paper by Professor Chrystal does not appear to go the length of Professor Clifford’s theories in regarding experience as our sole instructor. ‘It might be granted,’ says Mr. Chrystal, ‘as I

<sup>1</sup> *Atheism and the Value of Life* (London, 1884), pp. 45-47.

<sup>2</sup> Mallock, *ubi supra*.

for the most part take it to be, that any axioms that can be made the foundation of a consistent reasoned system are given *à priori*' (p. 6).<sup>1</sup> And I think that, even if it should prove impossible to regard all the axioms of Euclid as necessary truths, some of them, as also the elementary truths concerning number, may still be ranked within that category. Other writers may lend assistance. Thus, for example, there is much that is suggestive in the *Bampton Lectures* of Mr. Jackson, though I have failed to grasp with precision his view concerning the relation between deductive and inductive truth, and cannot but regret the extreme one-sidedness of many of his references to history. The *Boston Monday Lectures* for 1884, by Mr. Joseph Cook, also touch upon these themes. Mr. Goldwin Smith has been lending the powerful aid of his pen towards an exhibition of the peril involved in some evolutionary theories of morality.<sup>2</sup> If I do not speak of the gratitude also due to the late Professor Clerk Maxwell and to the authors of *The Unseen Universe* (Professors Tait and Balfour Stewart), it is because I suppose the works of those writers to be more immediately connected with the *à posteriori* rather than with the *à priori* arguments for religion, and because *The Unseen Universe* starts from the assumption of Theism.

On similar grounds, though with more diffidence, I pass by Canon Mozley's Sermon on Nature; the amplifications and additions to its arguments by my friend and colleague, Dr. Dowden, in his discourse on the same theme; the celebrated works of Mr. Ruskin, and the writings of the lamented Principal Shairp.

<sup>1</sup> I cite Professor Chrystal's paper as a source of information, and not as in the least degree wishing to make him responsible for any inferences drawn by Clifford from *Pangeometry*.

<sup>2</sup> I refer to the article in the *Contemporary Review* for June 1882, and to subsequent defences of the author's position.



## POSTSCRIPT.

CIRCUMSTANCES, with which it is not necessary to trouble the reader, have rendered the delay between the delivery and the publication of these Lectures longer than I had intended it to be, and longer than is desirable. But I take the opportunity of the delay to add a few last words on (a) the subject of Kant and the *a priori* view; (b) and on the alleged Pantheism of Plato. I must also (c) add something concerning Spinoza.

(a) The writer who first suggested to me the difference between a concept, such as that of the unicorn (false in itself but compounded of two real entities, a horse and a horn), and an idea which cannot be thus severed into parts, such as the idea of God and of the soul, was a French barrister, M. Nicolas. It is employed at the very outset of his *Etudes Philosophiques sur le Christianisme* (Paris, 1851. seventh ed.). But I have since found it in some work of earlier date, though I cannot recollect where—possibly in one of the treatises of De Maistre. It may be much earlier than this. Anselm has, I think, a partial—but only a partial—glimpse of the matter. In his reply to Gaunilo he seems to see the difference between our concept of a picture which is not yet produced, but only exists in the painter's mind, and our idea of the Divine nature.

The further argument, that this idea of a thing which is single and indiscernible is a strong plea for the true existence of the thing thus imaged to us, is disallowed by Kant. I am glad to find that in maintaining that Anselm has a real case in this matter, and that Kant has not quite done justice to its force, I can claim some measure of support from the writings of Principal Tulloch, of Professor Edward Caird, and of Principal Caird. Principal Tulloch speaks as follows :—

'In the same point of view we see the fallacy of the Kantian doctrine of the infinite. Admitting it as a regulating idea of human knowledge, Kant yet denied to it any objective validity. The idea according to him might be necessary to us, and yet not represent a reality. And so it might, were the ideal or notional the mode in which the infinite is alone present to us. But this is so far from being the case that the *idea* as present in the understanding is only the dim reflection of the *fact* present in reason. The infinite comes to us intuitively, and not notionally, and in this the very mode of its apprehension affirms its reality. The soul looks upward, and the light of the infinite dawns upon it. It presents itself as an objective presence—a self-revealing vision—and is not wrought out as a mere ideal projection from our mental restlessness. It is felt to be a reality, containing and conditioning the soul, which, with all its power, it cannot think away ; and this it would not be were it a mere created form of the soul.'—(*Burnett Prize Essay on Theism*, p. 280. Edinburgh, 1855.)

A little farther on Dr. Tulloch proceeds to say that—

'It is now admitted on all hands that Kant's denial of objectivity to the pure reason and his virtual readmission of their reality as postulates of the practical reason is the most inconsequent and feeble portion of his whole philo-

sophy. . . . We have in the last case no higher name for knowledge everywhere than belief. And this belief, as Sir Wm. Hamilton says, "is mistaken by Kant when recognized as a mere spiritual craving." It is rather "an immediate manifestation to intelligence, not as a postulate, but as a *datum*—not as an interest in certain truths, but as the fact, the principle, the warrant of their cognition and reality."<sup>1</sup>

Without claiming Professor Edward Caird as an actual supporter of the *a priori* argument for the being of God, it may be said that he is evidently unprepared to commit himself to its rejection on the ground adopted by Kant.

'Pure thought cannot be conceived as dwelling in itself, but only as relating to existence, to a world in time and space; and it is only (1) through the opposition between itself and such a world; and (2) through the transcendence of that opposition that it can come to the full consciousness of itself. In the language of theology, the ontological argument expresses the doctrine that God as a spirit is necessarily self-revealing to the world.'—*Philosophy of Kant*, chap. xviii.

Dr. Caird seems to show more marked favour to the Anselmian argument.

'The *Ontological Argument*, as commonly stated, finds in the very idea of God the proof of His existence. The thought of God in the mind demonstrates His Being.'

The Principal then proceeds, as his brother has also done, to exhibit the weakness of such reasoning if applied to food, or raiment, or (as in Kant's illustration) to dollars. But presently he adds—

<sup>1</sup> For a somewhat different and perhaps more favourable view of Kant, see an article in the *Fortnightly Review* (May 1844), 'The Speculative Basis of Unbelief,' by a most acute metaphysician, the Rev. David Greig.

'It is difficult, however, to conceive that an argument, of which the refutation seems so easy and obvious, could have imposed itself on thinkers such as those above named; and on closer examination we shall find that, imperfect as may be the form in which it has often been presented, the principle of this argument is that on which our whole religious consciousness may be said to rest.

'It is quite true that there are many things of which, from the mere idea or conception of them in our minds, we cannot infer the objective existence. If existence means, as in the case of Kant's dollars, the accidental existence of particular objects for sensuous perception, such an existence we cannot infer from thought. It is indeed of the very nature of such things that, regarded simply in themselves, they either may or may not be; and to infer their necessary existence from the idea of them would be in direct contradiction with that idea. But there are other ideas with respect to which this does not hold good; and there is especially one idea which, whether we are explicitly or only implicitly conscious of it, so proves its reality from thought, that thought itself becomes impossible without it. Its absolute objective reality is so fundamental to thought that to doubt it implies the subversion of all thought and all existence alike.'—Introduction to the *Philosophy of Religion* (Glasgow, 1880), pp. 153-156.

Principal Caird appears to me to throw himself more completely on Anselm's side than I have done. But I am far from presuming to say that he may not be in the right.

#### THE ALLEGED PANTHEISM OF PLATO.

The admirable scholarship, the philosophic thought, the acquaintance with German editions and criticisms of Plato,

and the independence of mind displayed by Mr. R. D. Archer-Hind and Mr. Henry Jackson in their treatment of the Platonic dialogues might almost justify us in calling them 'the *New Cambridge Platonists*.' Whether further study may bring me round to an opinion expressed by one of these gentlemen I cannot tell. But for the present, after some renewal of my own inquiries, and after conversations held with two of the best Greek scholars in this city, both of whom are conversant with such themes, I find myself unable to subscribe to the verdict of Mr. Archer-Hind when, in the Introduction to his very valuable edition of the *Phædo*, he speaks of 'the *matured Pantheism* of the *Timæus*.' How far I can go with him may be judged from the following statements :—

The phrase '*matured Pantheism*' implies that such an eschatology was not developed in the earlier dialogues. Thus much, indeed, our critic seems, in the context, distinctly to admit. 'Even were it shown,' he says, 'that personal immortality is inadmissible in the *Timæus*, it does not follow that it is so in the *Phædo*.'

But if we look back to a still earlier date, we must surely hold that Plato did not merely hint at, but emphatically assert a belief in personal immortality, unless we assume that the utterances ascribed to Socrates afford us no clue to the convictions of Plato himself. For towards the close of the *Apologia*, when Socrates is trying to impress upon his hearers his conviction that death will be a gain, he reserves to the last the prospect of possibly conversing with poets such as Orpheus and Musæus, Hesiod and Homer, and with victims of unrighteous judgments, such as Palamedes and Ajax, son of Telamon. The possibility of nothingness, of dreamless sleep, is indeed mentioned. But absorption into an impersonal *Anima Mundi* and loss of

individuality appears to have no place in the speaker's thoughts.

That Plato taught a real Theism has been the impression left upon minds very differently trained; such as, for example, those of Coleridge, Father Gratry, Rowland Williams, Davis, Döllinger. Williams and Davis make special appeal to the *Timæus*. I have elsewhere<sup>1</sup> cited a few sentences which, taken by themselves, appear to favour this view. 'To discover, then, the Creator and Father of this universe (*τὸν ποιητὴν καὶ πατέρα τοῦδε τοῦ παντὸς*) is difficult, and that he who has discovered Him should announce Him to all men is impossible' (p. 29). 'But when the Creator Father (*ὁ γεννήσας πατὴρ*) perceived that this created image of the eternal gods was endued with motion and life (*κινηθὲν αὐτὸν καὶ ζῶν ἐνενόησε*), He was delighted, and from His joy sought to render it still more like to its pattern.' Another passage, to which Mr. Rowland Williams calls particular attention, occurs in pp. 47, 48 of the *Timæus*, on the gift of sight and the other senses as imparted by God to man.

I am, however, compelled, on reconsidering the question, with the aid of the friends to whom I have referred and of the Introduction to this dialogue by Professor Jowett, to admit that there do appear to be some blemishes upon the clearness and precision of the doctrine of Theism as set forth by Plato. He is not perfectly consistent. He seems to admit the existence of matter moving about in an inharmonious and disorderly manner (*κινούμενον πλημμελῶς καὶ ἀτάκτως*), a chaos, in short, which is coeval with God. This is, indeed, the common teaching of Greek philosophy. But it is an assault, however unconscious, on the first pre-

<sup>1</sup> In an article contributed to *The Church Quarterly Review* of April 1877, headed 'Pantheism—From the Vedas to Spinoza' (p. 17, note).

rogative of the Creator, His Almightiness ; for if anything has existed without His leave then He is not Almighty. ‘The Creator in Plato,’ says Dr. Jowett (p. 568), ‘is still subject to a remnant of necessity which He cannot wholly overcome.’ ‘The Platonic compared with the Jewish description of the process of creation has less of freedom or spontaneity.’ The part assigned to man in the *Timæus* (though apparently modified, perhaps we might say corrected, in the *Laws*, book x. p. 903) may be thought to leave an opening for Pantheism, and such passages do not stand alone. Still I fail to perceive a doctrine of *matured Pantheism*.

#### SPINOZA.

I am sorry to find myself, on the subject of Spinoza, at variance with so calm, learned, and candid a thinker as Principal Fairbairn, who believes that Spinoza wrought well for the doctrine of Theism. But I am unable to retract a single word. To my thinking Mr. Leslie Stephen and Mr. Matthew Arnold thus far make for me, in that they are thoroughly conscious of the profound gulf between Spinozism and Hebraism. The Jews of the Portuguese synagogue at Amsterdam, in A.D. 1656, excommunicated Spinoza. ‘They,’ says Mr. Arnold, ‘remained children of Israel, and he became a child of modern Europe.’ Must we not add, ‘*Immane quantum discrepat*?’

Professor Edward Caird, though giving Spinoza credit for good motives, and even willing to accept the strange eulogy of Novalis, who called Spinoza ‘a God-intoxicated man,’ yet admits that ‘Spinoza has been called an Atheist, *not without reason*, if we look at his system from the outside, and in its ultimate logical results.’<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Philosophy of Kant* (p. 43).

'Spinoza,' said the late Principal Le Bas to me, 'may have believed in a God, but it was a God whom I should as soon think of worshipping as I should of falling down before the force of gravitation.' I might cite similar language from the Prize Essay on Theism by the Rev. W. Anchor Thomson, but I prefer to close with the often-quoted words of Niebuhr. Mr. Fairbairn maintains that Spinoza has benefited Christianity. But Niebuhr said, 'A Christianity after the fashion of the modern philosophers and Pantheists, without a personal God, without immortality, without human individuality, without historical faith, is no Christianity at all to me; though it may be a very intellectual, very ingenious faith-philosophy.'<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Life and Letters* (vol. ii. p. 123). While I am writing, the report of a similar reply by the Rev. Dr. Walter Smith has reached me. It is an expansion, clothed in language of much beauty, to an invitation to substitute belief in 'the stream of tendency' for belief in Theism and in Christianity. (See *Scotsman* newspaper of 26th December 1885.) The late Bishop Cotton of Calcutta, in his primary charge, has also spoken of the deadening tendency of Pantheism. He spoke from experience of its effects in India.

## ADDENDUM.

MUCH has been written concerning the force and practical authority of truths for which the proof falls short of absolute demonstration. It might suffice to refer to Bishop Butler's well-known dictum, in his introduction to the *Analogy*, that 'to us Probability is the very guide of life,' on which that wonderful treatise is so largely a comment. The question also occupies considerable space in Cardinal Newman's *Grammar of Assent*, and is there treated with much candour as well as ability (see esp. Part II., chap. vi.)

But to the slight references to this question made by me in pages 84 and 130, I wish to add the following:—(1) The Lecture headed 'What is Science?' delivered in Glasgow by the Duke of Argyll, and re-published in *Good Words* (vol. for 1885, p. 236); (2) a passage from M. Ozanam's *Civilization in the Fifth Century*, which runs as follows: 'The power of theology lies in its being the parent soil of faith and love. And mankind only loves what it takes upon trust, not what it can easily compass; the not understanding a thing is the condition of loving it; and whatever is capable of mathematical demonstration gives little or no warmth to the heart. Who has ever been in love with an axiom, with a truth that leaves no need of further search? The unknown is the most powerful con-

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stituent of love, for nothing fascinates the human mind like mystery ; and, on the contrary, we soon weary of what we comprehend. Mystery is the secret of love, and in love there is faith.'<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Although I have long known and possessed M. Ozanam's book, I owe the recollection of this passage to an article on 'The Mysteries of Revelation and of Nature' in *The Quiver* for November 1884, by my own diocesan, Bishop Cotterill. Frederick Robertson of Brighton has something like it in one of his Sermons, but I have mislaid my reference.

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<sup>1</sup> I have given an epitome of this essay in the *Christian Remembrancer* for April 1868, in an article headed "Lines of Demarcation," and based on it a reply to the Duke of Somerset (London, Ridgway, 1872).

<sup>2</sup> Extracts from this hymn have often been given, e.g. by the late Archbishop Sumner in his *Records of the Creation* (London, 1818). Compare Flint's *Theism*, where full justice is done to Cleanthes both as poet and reasoner.

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<sup>1</sup> It is with much regret that in the concluding pages of this volume I find myself obliged thus to describe the Principal of St. Andrews.



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